"THE WITCH'S PROPHECY," A GREAT SERIAL, WILL BEGIN NEXT WEEK.

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A WOMAN HATER;

Or, The Duke of Buckington's Defeat.

By Adrienne Roucolle.

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CHAPTER V.

THE GILDED HELL.

When that night Beatrice stepped into the sumptuous parlors of the Casino, a strange oppression swelled her heart. Here fortunes were made and lost, lives were blasted, hopes destroyed, homes ruined. A feeling of disdain for the smallness of human intelligence came to her, and so absorbed was she in her thoughts that Roger's mocking voice caused her to start as though awakened from some dream.

"Miss Marsonville, this is the place in which to admire the beauties of the feminine mind and heart."

"There are more men than women, I believe," she simply answered.

Roger laughed and replied, not the least abashed by the justice of the argument conveyed in those few words:

"True, but could you read the heart of each and every one of these you would see that it is for some woman that he thus lowers himself, risks his wealth, ruins his health and sometimes loses his life."

The girl raised her candid eyes, veiled with sorrow, and said slowly:

"I can only repeat what I have said before—you are to be pitied," and with a sweeping gesture toward the flushed faces of the fallen creatures who parade their beauty and their shame in this glitering hell of vice, she continued: "What are these few women, fallen into the mud of the gutters, beside the millions of noble creatures who in our hospitals, on our battlefields, in our homes, lead pure lives and bear on their heads the saintly crown of devotion and love? You look at the few, the pitiable few, but you pass by the many; you magnify the plainly seen faults of these few, but you seek not to discover the hidden virtues of the majority. None is so blind as he who will not see! Yes, I pity you more than I can express; more than I do that wretched man over at that table who has just lost his gold, for with him it is only money that is lost, and money is something which can be replaced; while with you it is the very essence of life that you lack—its sunshine, its joy!"

Roger gazed in surprise on the girl who thus addressed him. The animation of her cheeks, the vibrating tenderness of her voice, moved him in spite of himself, but the next minute he had overcome this momentary weakness, the sneer returned to his lips and his tones were as sarcastic as ever.

"Thank you for your pity, Miss Marsonville, but permit me to tell you it is misplaced, since I am happy now that I have ceased to believe in the very things you seek to praise. The keenest suffering I ever endured came to me from believing too much, and calm came only when I ceased to believe at all."

They walked on; Max was filled with fever at the sight of the scene before him. His sickly imagination quivered with voluptuous pleasure at the gorgeous sight which greeted his eye; the lights, the fair faces of the women, the clicking of the gold, the suppressed excitement of the very air went to his head like a powerful intoxicant. Suddenly he was recalled to himself by the Duke's cutting voice:

"Marsonville, look over there at the table at the left—your angel of three weeks ago, that perfect creature whom we saw leading the blind woman! What do you think of the change? See those flushed cheeks, those glittering eyes that the sight of gold fascinates, those quivering hands that cupidity makes tremble! Now tell me if you are as ready to call her an angel tonight!"

Both Max and his sister looked at the girl thus pointed out by Roger. She was a beautiful creature with a face of such purity of lines that she seemed out of place in this hell of vice. And its expression was a study in itself, so wild were the large gray eyes in their eager stare upon the roulette table, the half-opened lips, so white and quivering, the manner in which she leaned forward in breathless waiting was almost pitiful in its tragic intensity. Max was stupefied to find her there. Since that meeting on the Square Massena his thoughts had often dwelt on the lovely group formed by the blind woman and her beautiful companion; he could still see the gesture of tender protection with which she led her charge through the crowd. And now he had found her in this gambling hell!

The banker announced the winning color; an ashy pallor overspread the girl's face. Painfully she rose and walked blindly away. She had lost, but as she passed them her strength gave way, she staggered and would have fallen had not Max caught her in his arms.

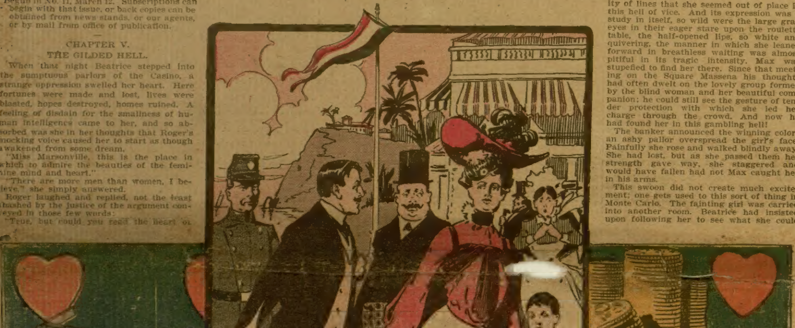
This swoon did not create much excitement; one gets used to this sort of thing in Monte Carlo. The fainting girl was carried into another room. Beatrice had insisted upon following her to see what she could do for the unfortunate, and now she busied herself trying to return her to consciousness. At last the gray eyes opened and looked wonderingly around. Then remembrance returned, and the slight, girlish form was convulsed with spasms of uncontrollable weeping.

Beatrice tried to calm her, to console this grief which she felt must have a deeper cause than the simple loss of money. After a while she grew calmer, and with that need of sympathy which comes to the unhappy, she said:

"Do not think that I am like those other women; that I gambled for pleasure or through love of gold. It was for my blind mother. The doctors told me that an operation might cure her, but we would have to go to Paris and it would take lots of money. We are poor; my father died three years ago, leaving us with debts; then the thought came to me to come here. So many had made fortunes with only small investments. I induced mother to sell our little home, and after paying what we owed we came here with two thousand francs, and new—now I—I have lost all; we are ruined. Poverty for her, shame for me, since no matter what the cost may be I will not let her starve."

Beatrice listened with tear-filled eyes. Here was a grief which nothing could ease. She had no money with her; besides, it would take a large sum to relieve this distress, and though they were in easy circumstances, they were by no means rich. Suddenly a wild thought came to her, a thought born of the place, the heavy atmosphere of which was loaded with the spirit of unrest and daring. She rose to her feet and said hurriedly:

"Promise me that you will wait here until I return. Swear to me on your hope of



Heaven, on your mother's head, that you will not leave this room until I come back."

The girl looked up, startled, yet replied:

"I will wait, only tell me——"

But Beatrice was gone.

Meeting her brother and the Duke of Buckington outside the door, she said hurriedly to Max, a new excitement breaking the usual calm of her voice:

"Max, have you some money with you? I wish to try my luck at the tables."

Max smiled and, drawing out his pocketbook, handed it to her, saying:

"You can have what there is, but I fear there will not be much, for I came off in such a hurry that I forgot to bring more money. But how is that unfortunate girl? Is she more reconciled? Is she——"

"Yes," answered Beatrice, as with feverish fingers she opened the purse. It contained only two gold pieces and some small change. "It's not enough," she muttered, and her eyes turned toward the Duke.

He understood and with a sneer drew out his pocketbook, questioning:

"Can I help you?"

"Yes; give me a hundred francs, it will perhaps do. My brother will pay you if I lose."

He gave her the money, which she took with a feverish movement little like her usual grace. Then, without another word, she left them and hastened to the seat lately occupied by the girl, and which, with the common superstition of the gambler, no one had taken, it being considered unlucky.

She took the money, counted it upon the table, then in a choked, unnatural voice, let fall the words:

"The red."

Roger watched her in silence. He felt he was near solving the problem he had studied so long; in a few moments she would expose to his sneering eyes the cankerous depths of her soul.

The red came out—Beatrice had won! A murmur ran along the table, all eyes being centered upon her. Her face was deadly pale. Nervously she counted the money, cast it down once more and in accents more hoarse than ever she repeated the words:

"The red."

Max's face betrayed surprise, almost alarm. He had never seen his sister in such a state of excitement. As for Roger, the sneer on his lips had deepened. This girl, who had posed herself as a model of perfection, was no better than the rest of them. The glitter of gold made her forget her reserve and show hrself in her true light. Once more red won, and Max, bending over the excited girl, said:

"Come, Beatrice, I suppose you have won enough. Don't trust too much to luck. Better come away."

She did not heed him. Maybe, in the powerful emotion which held her in its hold she did not hear him, for with a movement almost mechanical in its rapidity she gathered up her gains, counted them, then threw them all down upon the table with the same words:

"The red."

A crowd had gathered around her. This reckless play, the wonderful luck which accompanied it, the beauty of the girl, the strange expression of her face, the unnatural sound of the voice attracted the attention of all, and a hundred eyes now watched the play, all made breathless by the suppressed emotion of the scene. Once again red came out, and the banker, turning to Beatrice, said with cold politeness:

"Madam, you have broken the bank."

This was greeted by a murmur of admiration from the spectators. Beatrice did not even hear it, for she rose like one in a dream and, gathering up her gold and bank notes, she walked past her brother and the Duke, past the staring spectators, looking neither to the right nor left, and hurried to the room where she knew the girl was still waiting for her. Max was bewildered and frightened by the look on his sister's face, and pulling the Duke by the arm said:

"Come, let us see what she is going to do; I don't understand Beatrice tonight."

Roger followed him, thinking as he went:

"She has gone to put the money in the safe-keeping of some bank agent. Bah, she is like the rest! They are all alike—gold is their only god!" But somehow his triumph brought him more pain than pleasure.

They reached the door of the room just as Beatrice disappeared within, and looking in through the open door they saw her cast her bank notes and gold pieces in the lap of the young girl who had fainted earlier in the evening, and in the same voice quivering with suppressed excitement said:

"Here, my poor child, take this money. It will give you wealth for the rest of your days and will aid you to restore your blind mother's sight."

With dazzled eyes, unable to understand her sudden good fortune, the girl looked up at the white face above her, then at the money in her lap. Beatrice continued:

"Don't you understand me? That money is yours. I played for you. God listened to my passionate appeal, for I won. Oh, while I waited, how earnestly I prayed, asking of God the boon of giving me the means to save you. He listened to my prayer and you are saved. Now return home to your mother, and never again tempt fortune by resorting to gambling."

While Beatrice was receiving the sobbing thanks of the one she had saved the two men looked upon the touching scene. Max's eyes were misty with tears, while Roger felt for the first time in eight years a feeling of admiration for a woman. His hate had caused him to bring Beatrice here to better triumph over her, and now he was defeated by his own means. Ah, surely the power of love would be stronger than the power of hate!

CHAPTER VI.

A STEP NEARER SALVATION.

As they were leaving the Casino Roger remained silent; something in Beatrice's face awed him. When they were once without, and the breath of the flowers, the twinkling smile of the stars, the softness of the night air came to them, calm returned to the girl's excited nerves. She gave a deep sigh and as a sad smile passed like a shadow over her lips she turned her pale face toward the Duke of Buckington, saying:

"I fear you have utterly failed to convince me, for even here in this hell of vice I have found one of those noble creatures I wished you to admire. That unfortunate girl who tonight was staking her last hope on the turn of a wheel did this not through love of gold but to save a blind mother, to return light to those darkened eyes which were denied the joy of seeing the growing beauty of her daughter."

Roger tried to sneer, but somehow a new feeling of respect, timidity before Beatrice, took the sharpness from his remark, for he only said:

"There may be exceptions, perhaps, since there is a saying that every rule has its exceptions. We can't pronounce ourselves on this case until we know that girl's inner thoughts, all her life and acts. The love she has for her mather may be her one redeeming quality; the rest of her heart is perhaps dark and evil." Then abruptly: "Oh, do not try to return trust to my heart! It would be cruel to do so, for it might return to me the power of suffering. Why break the stony calm of my unbelief?"

Beatrice had a start of joyous surprise. Was sh[illegible] succeed, to win him back from h[illegible]ward womankind? Involuntarily she rested her hand on his arm in an unconscious gesture of tenderness, then said:

"I would give much could I have the knowledge that through my efforts one soul will be saved. So I wish to remind you of your promise. Tomorrow you are to view my way of looking at the feminine sex."

They entered the hotel as she said this, but Roger's old sneer had returned. Beatrice's words had conveyed to his mind a wrong impression, for he thought:

"Ah, she wishes me to trust in the sex that I may then learn to trust and love her. Her show of generosity a while ago was simply a clever ruse to win my admiration. What were those few thousand pounds won at the roulette table to the hope of having millions with a noble name? She wishes to save my soul that afterward I may commit the folly of placing it in her keeping. Yes, they are all alike—scheming, mercenary, calculating, and fool is he who trusts them," and he closed his soul to the healing influence of the gentle girl.

Aloud he said as he bowed coldly to brother and sister:

"I never go back on a promise, Miss Marsonville; tomorrow I will be at your disposal, only I cannot promise that I will believe in all you will show me," and with these cold words he left them.

Max was very tired. The excitement of the evening, that long ride in the open air, had completely exhausted his feeble strength, and it was with a contented sigh that he stretched himself in his bed. Beatrice, entering the room a few moments later to bid him good-night, found him asleep. For a few seconds she remained gazing tenderly upon the pale, tired face, then her eyes became misty and she murmured:

"Dear brother, how gladly would I give up my own youth and health to see you returned to your one-time vigor," then placing a light caress on the blonde curls, she softly left the room.

She did not retire at once, but remained long by the open window. The events of the night returned to her mind, bringing with them the fever which had filled her the whole evening. Then she thought of Roger's sudden change of manner and she muttered half-aloud:

"I thought I had him conquered and was too prompt to rejoice, for by his coldness I saw that I had gone too far and lost in an instant the small advantage I had gained. But," and her eyes glittered with a new determination, "I will and must save him," and with this resolution she went to bed.

The next morning when she met the Duke at breakfast she became still more conscious of his coldness and mocking irony. He gave his exclusive attention to Max, and on the return journey to Nice he barely addressed a dozen words to the young girl. When they reached the villa she simply said:

"Your Grace will remain to lunch with us, then this afternoon we will visit some of the places in which I recruit my types of true womanhood; only as the places where they are to be found are far from cheerful for a sick man, you will have to endure my company without the antidote of my brother's presence," and she left the two men alone, returning only when lunch was served.

Roger thought: "Ah, I read through your game. You wish to entrap me, and, for that sort of work, even your beloved brother would be in the way," and his mouth took a bitterer fold.

Still in that walk through the hospitals, in her remarks on the gentle-faced sisters who devoted their lives to the sick, the poor, the unhappy—during those hours they spent together nothing in her words or in her manner betrayed that her intentions were any but what she had said they were, the redeeming of his sick soul, the curing of his unbelief. And Roger, though he sneered at everything, felt a new feeling gradually steal into his heart. It was not a return to confidence yet; he had been too deeply wounded for that; but it was a sentiment of peace, of content he had not known for many years and which took the edge from the bitterness of his thoughts.

As they were leaving the hospital Beatrice had said:

"Those Sisters of Charity we have just seen bending lovingly over those sufferers have no object in view but the good of humanity. Their sole reward on this earth is the grateful look of dying eyes, the tender pressure of hands that disease has weakened. Gold is not their god, for they accept it not; they labor for love and charity."

The Duke then remarked:

"Bah! all of them have had a past in which the passion they now scorn had full play. Could we but read their hearts would we not find there a disappointed love, an unsatisfied ambition, some dream remaining unrealized, some——"

"We might," she hastened to interrupt; "but in that case would not the blame lay with the men who deceived or disdained them? No matter from what cause they work, do they not turn their disappointment into a blessing? Instead of remaining embittered members of society, they give their lives, their youth, their love to those who have need of them."

Roger had not replied to this last retort, but for the rest of the walk he was less bitter in his remarks, for somehow the cutting words which used to be his defense against the wiles of women could not pass his lips when he saw the pure face by his side or remembered the noble act of the night before.

She did everything to prove her side of the question; she took him to the poorer part of the town and showed him how there, amid filth, poverty and misery, shone many an example of the unselfishness of woman's love.

And now, as they were returning to the villa, her anxious eyes studied his face. Not a line had softened. The same mocking smile was on his lips, the same scornful look in his eyes, the same cold irony in his voice, and in a momentary wavering of her resolution she thought:

"Is the case hopeless? Oh, God, is there no cure?"

Yet, while she thus despaired, her patient had taken an invisible step on the road of salvation.

CHAPTER VII.

THE ITALIAN PRINCE.

During the week which followed, the Duke of Buckington avoided going to the little villa by the sea. He was half angry with Beatrice, for, though he had not owned it to her, he felt that victory was hers, that somehow his scorn for women was less bitter, and the power that the young girl was beginning to exercise over his mind frightened him. Often he found himself comparing her to his proud love of years gone by—the fair, false Diana he had worshiped. Yes, they were different, these two women, both in features and in disposition. Diana's dark, faultless beauty had not one line in common with the blonde loveliness of Max's sister. Beatrice's large, blue eyes lacked the fire, the sparkle of those glorious black orbs which years ago had won his heart; yet, somehow, in spite of himself, he thought that they reflected a more perfect soul, more unselfish instincts, more elevated sentiments.

Max came to see him several times during that week, and one day during the conversation he remarked:

"I think Beatrice made a conquest the night she played at the Casino. The millionaire Prince de Botticelli, over whom everybody has gone raving mad because of his wealth and wonderful beauty, has asked for an introduction to my sister. He called Monday evening with Lord Breman, with whom I have a speaking acquaintance, and, I assure you, the Prince is the most charming man I ever met. Still, if eyes can speak, I can assure you that this handsome Prince did not come to see me; he scarcely took his eyes off of Beatrice. He told us he had noticed us at Monte Carlo, where he was spending a few days, and as he had watched my sister's wonderful play at the roulette table, he was unable to resist the temptation of complimenting her on her luck, but mostly on her noble generosity, since somehow the story of her helping that poor girl has leaked out and was the talk of the day in Monte Carlo."

A frown gathered on the Duke's brow and it was in his coldest tones that he asked:

"Your sister must be quite proud of this conquest, I suppose?"

"Well, not exactly," answered Max with a laugh. "Beatrice is a queer girl, for what would have flattered the conceit of most girls leaves her perfectly indifferent. When I asked her what she thought of the Prince she simply answered that he seemed like a perfect gentleman and was a pleasant companion, but all this was said without the least glow of enthusiasm. I must confess I was disappointed."

"I have heard much about this Prince de Botticelli; he is pronounced by all who know him as not only the handsomest but also the richest man in Europe," remarked Roger, surprised at the sudden joy Max's words on his sister's indifference had caused him.

"Yes, and what is said about his personal charm can never come up to the truth. Until you see him you cannot imagine that a mere man could have such a god-like face. His beauty is almost dazzling, while his tall, supple form has such perfection of outline that he brings to mind a statue of Apollo."

The Duke tried to laugh away his annoyance by saying:

"Why, Max, if you were a woman I would say you were in love with this Italian."

"If you don't believe me you can come and see for yourself. He is to dine tomorrow evening with us, and I am sure Beatrice will not object to having another guest."

"What!" exclaimed the Duke in surprise, "are you already intimate enough to invite him to dinner?"

"Well, yes," answered Max with a smile. "Those Italians have a way of winning their way rapidly. After that first call he sent flowers to Beatrice, he came for me several times in his carriage and took me for long drives by the sea, and before I knew it we were friends."

"He is very rich, I heard."

"Yes; I don't think he knows the exact extent of his fortune. Half of Italy seems to belong to him, from the reports I hear, and he does spend money as though he knew not its value. I will not hide from you the fact that I am very happy to note his attention to Beatrice. Her future worried me; with my illness and the prospect of an early death I often thought of what would become of her when I die. Now if she were to marry Prince de Botticelli my anxiety would cease; she would have a brilliant name, untold wealth, and, what is most precious, an excellent husband, for, being a judge of human nature, I would confide to him without the least fear my sister's happiness."

Roger did not answer. He could not understand the feeling of pain, of hopelessness which suddenly settled over him. When Max rose to leave he asked:

"Can we count upon you for tomororw evening? You would have an excellent opportunity to meet the famous Prince."

Roger hesitated, then said:

"Yes, I will come."

When Max was gone he tried to excuse his weakness by saying:

"If I am to study this girl's duplex character I must not neglect the chance of watching her lay her batteries to entrap the wealthy Prince. I will be a spectator in this little drama of real life and I will enjoy seeing the struggles of the unfortunate fly in the spider's web," and charmed by this comparison, he added with a sneering smile: "Yes, that is it; we men are the flies, women the spiders, and their beauty and assumed gentleness the invisible threads of their webs."

The following evening he arrived early at the villa; he wanted to see the effect the Prince de Botticelli's entry would produce upon the young girl; he wanted to catch on her face the glimmer of the satisfied pride which surely must be filling her heart."

Beatrice greeted him with her usual simple grace and that smile of welcome which was becoming dangerously sweet to his skeptical heart. She was simply dressed in white with a bunch of pink roses at her throat, and Roger, in spite of himself, could not help thinking that never had she seemed so fair.

When Prince de Botticelli arrived the Duke realized at once that all which had been said about his handsome face and stately form were not exaggerated. He was indeed the most physically perfect man he had ever seen, while his manner was above reproach, his voice soft and caressing, and Roger somehow thought:

"There is a man a woman might truly love, even though he were a beggar," and with a deep sigh he looked at Beatrice.

Her manner toward the Prince was the same it had been toward him—cordial, gentle, smiling, but without the least bit of coquetry. She was simply a charming hostess, nothing more.

The evening passed pleasantly and quickly, for Roger, like every one else, could not resist the charm of De Botticelli's conversation and perfect breeding. Besides, Beatrice sang for them, and Roger, who had never sought to discover any of the girl's talents, was startled by the wonderful sweetness of her voice. A sudden impulse seized him, and he asked Beatrice if she would sing a certain English ballad which in years gone by had been his favorite, and which Diana had often sung to him. Beatrice complied with her usual gentle smile, and soon the rich tones of her voice roce and fell upon the air, carrying the young Duke back to the happy past before he had lost his trust in women. When she paused he thanked her, but his voice betrayed an unusual emotion, to conceal which he rose and almost immediately took his leave.

The weeks which followed were full of strange unrest for Roger. Whenever he called at the villa he either found the Prince or some bouquet of costly flowers which spoke of his constant attentions to the young girl.

Beatrice had long guessed the Prince's intentions, for his eyes had long since told her the secret which his lips had not yet revealed—he loved her. This knowledge brought only pain to her heart, since, though she admired him, though with all the power of her mind she tried to learn to love him, she found the task impossible, and she, as yet, was unable to guess the reason why.

One day, some six weeks after the first meeting, she was alone with the Prince and in a voice that emotion made tremble he told her of his love and asked her to become his wife. With the tender gesture of a mother soothing a suffering child, she laid her hand on his arm and answered:

"Prince de Botticelli, let me first tell you how honored I feel that you should have chosen me, of all other girls, to share your heart and name; but, though my words will no doubt pain you, I must tell you that, not being able to return your love and give you the whole of my heart, I cannot become your wife. It would be giving you the casket without the jewel. I admire you deeply; I would like to keep you as a friend; but love I cannot feel, and, if you have judged

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Write me and I will send you the book. Try my remedy for a month. If it fails the loss is mine.

Address Dr. Shoop, Box 9602, Racine, Wis.

Mild cases not chronic are often cured by one or two bottles. At all druggists.

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Madam—I didn't hear you last night when you came in.

Monsieur—Ah! That accounts for it.

Madam—Accounts for what?

Monsieur—The fact that I didn't hear you.

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Alice A. Wetmore, Box 87, Norwich, Conn., says if any sufferer from Heart Disease will write her she will, without charge, direct them to the perfect home cure she used.

me correctly, you will easily understand that I would never consent to marry a man who had not my heart."

The Prince, of course, tried to plead his cause, to ask her to give him time to win her; but to this she answered sadly:

"It is useless, Prince de Botticelli; I did try. I tried with all my strength, but failed. My brother wished to see me married and happy, and, for his sake, I tried to teach my heart the lesson of love. In spite of my efforts, I have not succeeded, and all I can now offer you is my sincere friendship and esteem."

That night Prince de Botticelli left Nice carrying in his heart a deep regret which only years could heal. He had loved and lost, and he suffered.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE MAD DOG.

The next day as the Duke of Buckington was idly reading the evening papers he gave a sudden start in which amazement was strangely mingled with a feeling of boundless pleasure. He had just glanced over the lines relative to the Prince de Boticelli's departure from Nice. He let the paper drop and with his eyes fixed afar on the luminous extent of the sea, now bathed in the fiery rays of the setting sun, he murmured:

"Have they quarreled, or has she refused him? But no, that would not be possible. Where is the woman that would refuse to become Princess de Botticelli, wife of the richest as well as the handsomest man of Europe? Bah! that would be too noble for a woman, for though she might have no love for him, she surely would not disdain the advantage of the position. There must be some other cause, and he will no doubt return; then he will take her back with him and——" He rose without finishing his thought.

When, half an hour later, he knocked at the villa, he found Max alone; Beatrice was in her room with a nervous headache, and Max said:

"Poor girl, it always gives her pain to see any one suffer, and this time she feels it more, since it was she who inflicted the wound."

"What has happened?" asked Roger, though, somehow, he knew what would be the reply.

"Well, I suppose Beatrice would object to my telling if she knew, for she is not a woman to boast of a conquest; but last night the Prince de Botticelli asked her to become his wife and she refused because she did not love him. Poor man! he took it deeply to heart, for he loved Beatrice with that love which comes but once in a lifetime. I will not conceal from you that her decision disappointed me; I would so liked to have seen her in the keeping of that true man who loved her so, but she told me:

"'Should I marry Prince de Botticelli without love it would be simply selling myself for his name and wealth, and that would not only be dishonest but base. I would despise myself to my dying day if I was ever weak or vain enough to so lower myself.'

"After that, what could I say? Nothing; those words forced me to admire still more her noble character."

Roger made no reply, for he felt that Max was right; that, by refusing the wealthy Prince because she did not love him, Beatrice had proved that one woman at least was above the mercenary calculations he had attributed to the whole of the feminine sex. The Duke of Buckington did not remain long that evening, for, without owning it to himself, he missed the girl's presence. Before leaving, however, he said to his friend:

"If the day is fine tomorrow, I'll come for you and we will take a walk together."

The next day the sun shone bright and warm, and Max was early dressed for the promised promenade. When the Duke arrived he turned to Beatrice, who he saw not dressed for the street.

"Why, are you not coming, too, Miss Marsonville? The day is so perfect it is almost a crime to remain indoors in such weather."

Beatrice started, and a bright coloring stole to her cheeks, which today were strangely pale. This was the first time Roger had asked for her company, and she was both pleased and surprised, but she replied:

"If you don't mind having me, I should like to go. I think the walk would do me good."

"Certainly we want you, little girl, so run and change your dress. We will wait for you in the garden," said her brother.

As the two men walked on Roger remarked:

"Your sister seems pale today."

"Yes, her sympathy is too much for her. The sight of Prince de Botticelli's pain has saddened her, and it will take her several days before she gets back to her normal calm."

But the Duke thought, with a return of his old bitterness:

"She already regrets the position she has lost. Perhaps she thought the Prince would plead, would seek to win her in spite of her refusal, and now she is disappointed to think that her scheme has failed. Yes, that is the cause of her pallor and her mournful eyes. I was foolish to think for an instant that a woman could have a noble impulse."

Still, when Beatrice rejoined them, something in that sweet, pale face rebuked the injustice of his thought.

During the walk Beatrice spoke but little. Her thoughts were far away, following the lonely man whose life she had so unwillingly darkened. When they reached the Square Massena Max complained of being tired, so they took seats beneath the trees and watched the picturesque spectacle of the continual stream of people who passed before them.

All at once Beatrice's attention became fixed on a beautiful little boy about five years of age. There was such perfect beauty in the childish face, with its clustering curls of jet black hair, and the large dark eyes, that Beatrice's sense of the beautiful caused her to watch with marked interest the slightest movement of the child. His nurse, a young and pretty English maid, paid little heed to the boy; she was far too busy looking around her at the ever-changing scene to take much notice of the child.

Suddenly the appalling cry of "A mad dog!" was heard, and the crowd, rushing in all directions to save themselves, separated the nurse from her charge, and soon the little boy stood alone in the deserted square, while from one of the side streets appeared a black dog, whose glaring eyes and foamy mouth spoke of madness. On his track men followed with sticks and stones, maddening still more the furious beast.

With a cry Beatrice leaped forward. The danger to which the child was exposed made her forgetful of her own should she go to the rescue. But Roger pulled her almost roughly back; then in three leaps he was at the boy's side just as the dog made a leap at him. Roger had just time to seize the brute by the throat; then, between the man and the beast began a struggle which was watched with poignant emotion by the breathless crowd. Roger would not have been victorious, for fury and madness gave the dog supernatural strength, had not a gendarme come up and with the butt of his revolver made an end of the struggle.

When Roger turned he found Beatrice by his side. Her face was colorless, her eyes wild, her lips panting.

"Why did you come?" he asked almost fiercely, moved by the danger to which she had been exposed. "I might not have been able to subdue that brute, then what would have become of you?"

But Beatrice did not even hear him. Her eyes were fixed in tragic horror upon his hand, which was covered with blood. The next moment she had seized his hand, saying hoarsely:

"My God, you are wounded!"

"It is nothing; just a scratch from the dog's fang, but—what are you doing?"

Beatrice had raised his hand to her mouth and was drawing the blood which, coursing through his frame, might endanger his life. Roger tried to withdraw his hand, but she clung to it with a desperation which conquered; besides, the gendarme was saying:

"Mademoiselle is right. It is the best thing that can be done! After that I would advise Monsieur to see a doctor, then leave for Paris on the first train. Hydrophobia is not a thing to be trifled with."

Max came up at that moment, his weakness being so great that he could scarcely walk, and his voice was very faint as he said:

"Are you hurt, Roger? Oh, what is going to happen?"

"Nothing," calmly replied the Duke, "save a visit to the Pasteur Institute in Paris, for, as this good man says, hydrophobia is too serious a thing to be trifled with," and to Beatrice, in gentle, tender tones, "Come, Miss Marsonville, you have sacrificed yourself enough; all the poison must me out by this time," and he withdrew his hand, adding, "Now for a doctor and to get away from the staring crowd."

Now that all danger was past, the crowd had drawn near to better see the hero. The nurse, to whose carelessness the accident was partly due, came up at this moment, and with the child tightly clasped in her arms, said in English, her voice still trembling with fright:

"Could I know Monsieur's name? My mistress will scurely want to thank him for saving her child."

Roger and Beatrice had already walked on, and Max, who longed to follow, hastily took a card from his pocket and handed it to the maid, saying:

"Here is my name and address. Your mistress can come to my house for information, for the Duke of Buckington leaves immediately for Paris to have his wound treated," and he followed his sister and the Duke.

Another installment of this extremely interesting story will appear in next week's issue of this paper. The Ledger is without question the best family paper for the price of subscription now published in the United States. Special free gifts of cameras and patterns are offered on other pages of this paper. Do not miss them.

THIN DIET

No Nourishment In It.

It's not easy to keep up when coffee has so ruined the stomach that food won't digest.

A Missouri woman says: "I had been an invalid for two years from stomach trouble caused by coffee, got so bad I couldn't digest food and for quite a while I lived on milk and lime water—nothing but that—a glass of milk and lime water six times a day. In this way I managed to live, but of course did not gain.

"It was about 5 months ago I began using Postum Food Coffee; I did not need the milk and lime water after that, for I gained rapidly and I can now eat a good meal and drink from 1 to 3 cups of Postum each meal and feel fine.

"I would not go back to coffee for any reasonable pay. I like Postum better than coffee now and make Postum by directions on box, and it is just fine; never found a better way to make it than on box. Now this is all true and you can easily prove it." Name given by Postum Co., Battle Creek, Mich.

Postum is a brew from field grains with all the nourishment left in. It makes red blood and rebuilds particularly well where coffee has done damage, as it does to nearly all who drink it.

A 10 days' trial of Postum in place of coffee works wonders. There's a reason.

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Truthful.

"Now," said Slusher, as he finished telling a long yarn, "tell me honestly have you ever heard that story before?"

"Yes," said Tucker, "I have heard the story told before, but, to be honest, I'll have to admit I never heard it told so badly before."

Boys Who Make Money

Boys Who Make Money

A Book for Boys—Free

In a handsome, illustrated book just issued a number of boys tell how they started in business for themselves and made money in spare time. All the details are given — how much they earned, how they earned it, and the different ways they devised to earn more and more each week. Some of the boys made from $10 to $15 a week. They were just ordinary boys; they had no special advantages — didn't have or need a penny to begin, only ambition, energy and the thought of making a few dollars every week for themselves. The book is finely illustrated in colors, with photographs of about 50 of the boys. You'll be surprised to see how young some of them are — one boy is only seven years old.

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All you need do is to sign the coupon on the corner of this notice, and mail it to us. We'll send the book, together with particulars of a plan how any boy can go to the St. Louis Fair next summer and take a friend with him, all expenses paid.

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Why of It.

"You needn't waste your time," said the busy man. "I'm not going to let you insure my life, and that settles it."

"But," insisted the solicitor, "would you mind telling me what objection you have to insurance?"

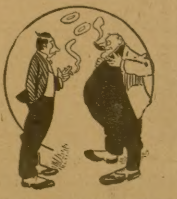
"Well, if you must know," replied the b. m., "the idea of my being more valuable after I'm dead than while I'm alive is distasteful to me. And now, sir, you will oblige me by closing the door from the outside."

More Value.

Freddy—Gussie Sapp says he has a coat-of-arms.

Charley—What good is that? Why, I have a coat-of-cloth.

Sure Thing.



Uncle Hen—No, sir! When I first came to town I hadn't a single penny in my pocket.

Nephew—Is that possible?

Uncle Hen—Yew bet ye! But I had $28.43 in my sock, by Hen! I warn't taking no chances!

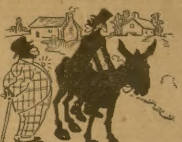
A Bright Young Idiot.

While the young woman was making a hurried toilet upstairs, her father was entertaining her caller.

"By the way, Mr. Spoonamore," he asked, "how do you stand on this question of imperialism?"

"Why," responded young Spoonamore, "I've always thought it was—er—more becoming to most people than a goatee."

Prepared.



Uncle Rastus—Yo' want mah daughter's hand in marriage, does yo'? Is yo' able to provide foh a wife?

Apollo Jackson—Yassir; I'se already bought de washtubs an' clo'seline an' ringah an' props.

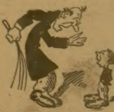
Fascinated by the Name.

"I was telling my wife all about Tibet last evening, but she seemed little interested."

"'Yes?'"

"When I got to Lhassa and told her it was called the 'Forbidden City,' she woke right up. 'Forbidden City?' she repeated. 'Yes,' I said, 'Forbidden City.' My wife smiled in that way she has when she is ready to shut off all opposition. 'Well,' she said, 'we will visit this Forbidden City when we go away for our next summer's trip.'"

For Form's Sake.



Teacher—Edwin, I must take you across my knee.

Edwin—Say, couldn't you drop dat an' give me a punch in de solar plexus? It 'ud put me in better shape wit' de fellers.

AN OKLAHOMA MYSTERY;

OR

The Girl-Widow's Crime.

, , ,

By Helena Ballard White.

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CHAPTER VII.

"I can't talk—I'm so happy," said Doll. "Oh, Stanley, to possess the love of a man like you repays for every bit of sorrow that I have ever known. So you do believe in me, Stanley?"

"As I do my God—you cannot doubt it?"

"I have no reason to, Stanley."

"When will we get married, Doll?"

"When this mystery is cleared up—when my name is freed from the stain upon it."

"Oh, pshaw, Doll! Don't say that. We have no assurance that the mystery will ever be solved, so don't wait for that. You know we are to prove your innocence when we can."

"You are generous and noble, Stanley, but I will not marry until the murderer of Frank Daniels is known, and I stand as free from suspicion as yourself. It would be unwise. Your friends would be saying, 'What, he married that woman—that woman whom they say killed a man!' You would hear this so much you would begin to question yourself as to your sanity at the time you asked me to become your wife, and——"

"I should hear that just once, Doll. No one would venture the second time. Can't you trust yourself with me, Doll?"

"Your persuasions are hard to overcome, Stanley, but I couldn't—I could not marry you as I am situated just now. But I will tell you something comforting. I have a clew!"

"What! as to the real perpetrator of the crime?"

"Exactly. It may take some time, but I shall bring that criminal to justice, just as sure as my name is Doll Austin; so you can chew on this crumb of comfort until I furnish you another, Stanley."

"It's a sweet morsel, but tell me, what have you learned? You know how deeply interested I am."

"Why, I played gypsy today, and strolled down to the river. As I supposed, Maude Hill passed on her pony.

"'Fortune told, fortune told?' I said, feeling that I was well disguised.

She stopped her pony and asked my price. Of course I made it cheap, and the fly was accordingly caught in the web which I had been spinning. I shuffled the cards and laid them before me on the grass. Then I said: 'There are dark cards all about you—spades, you see. This means trouble—you have had a great sorrow come into your life, lady. You have recently lost a lover—is that not true?'

"'Yes,' she whispered.

"Then I went on to describe him. 'You do seem to know things,' she said.

"'He died—let me see—three months ago yesterday, and by a woman's hand.'

"'Yes—yes,' she said excitedly.

"I really thought she was going to faint. 'You quarreled the night before,' I went on. I looked up, but she was silent.

"'You quarreled about some woman—tell me, do I speak the truth? I cannot go on unless you tell me; and I see before me here a future that you should know about. Tell me, do I speak the truth that it was occasioned by some woman?'

"'Yes, yes, you are right,' she said.

"'He called upon the other woman and asked her hand in marriage when he was already pledged to you. Answer me—yes or no.'

"'Well, yes, then,' she faltered.

"'And you were jealous?'

"'Yes, but I didn't—that is, we had no serious quarrel about this.'

"Just then we heard a spring wagon creaking some distance away, and seeing that it was her father, the damsel fair whispered: 'I'll see you again,' and hurriedly mounted her pony. Tomorrow I shall see her and get more out of her."

"You are beginning right, Doll, to prove that he was her lover—that she was jealous, and they quarreled. You see, she had an object in killing him," said Stanley.

"A woman did the shooting, Stanley—the evidence shows that—the hair and the handkerchief, you know."

"Well, you are a wonderful girl, Doll—who but you would ever have thought of tricking her so? I intended going clear to Dodge city to look up the man who worked for them here at the time of the murder, and learn from him if the fellow was her lover or simply a friend of the family, as she claims."

"I wish that I had had a witness to this conversation, Stanley. I made a mistake in not having. Tomorrow, near sundown, I am going to try my luck again, and then I shall have some one screened behind a tree."

"Yes, that is what you must be sure to do. Let it be me. Tell me, Doll, how do you account for your revolver being found near the man at the time he was killed?"

"Why, without a doubt Maude Hill stole it from my cabin when I was down by the stream one whole afternoon with No-dine and the baby. Upon reaching here I said, 'Some one has been here.' I could see the prints of a horse's feet in the dust, and it seemed to step around a great deal, as though restless. Evidently, whoever rode it got off and went inside, remaining for some time. This incident I did not recall until I was in the courtroom being tried for the crime. Then, as it flashed through my mind, it almost staggered me for a moment. For then Maude Hill's pony stood before me, and her entrance to the cabin, which is always left unlocked. You know her father had been there a few nights before, when they claimed I insulted him so outrageously, and she probably called to pull my hair and tell he how all the women of the settlement were casting ugly aspersions because I lived alone in a place like this, as she hinted at once before. I could see it all before me very plainly, but I had only my suspicions to incriminate her, so I said nothing. Tell me, how did you happen to implicate her, Stanley?"

"Well, I knew that you didn't do it, and in thinking of some one else with a motive I naturally chanced upon the fair Maude. I thought if he were her lover she would be angry to see him talking with you in your dooryard that night, and when he left you she followed him up and quarreled with him, or shot him in cold blood. That possibly he had been the cause of her ruin at some time, and had refused to marry her."

"I have thought of those things, Stanley. Oh, if I can clear my name of this, how happy—how happy I shall be!"

"We will do it—we are on the right track, Doll. I hope you will see her again tomorrow; so keep up your courage."

As Doll was preparing for bed that night, somewhere near 10 o'clock, the happiest of thoughts running through her head, she was surprised to hear a rap. Upon opening the door, Miss Maude Hill immediately stepped into the room.

"Rather an untimely call, Miss Hill," said Doll, putting down the candle.

"Yes, that's true. I started earlier, but was detained on the way. I came to offer you twenty-five dollars more than you paid for the quarter-section that you bought of Dan Clover, or to learn your price."

"Oh, it is already sold," answered Doll, carelessly. "I sold it less than twenty-four hours after I had made the purchase."

"And to whom, may I ask?"

"To Mr. Stanley Horton."

"So you thought you would buy him if you couldn't get him in any other way?"

"I think he is a good investment, Miss Maude. I'll look around and see if I can find one for you, or write to the matrimonial papers—run an 'ad.' something like this: 'A woman who has an interesting past and of uncertain age, kindly solicits the——'"

"I am not trying to palm myself off—for a wax doll, anyhow," Maude broke in.

"No, it wouldn't be a very clever thing to do at your age, Miss Hill."

"How dare you insult me in this way, you jailbird!" said the visitor, hotly.

"Take you that!" said the Indian girl, who peeped from her closet and hurled a plate at the offender's head.

"I think you had better leave, Miss Hill, if you care anything about your neck. No-dine is a veritable savage when she gets started; you see, I keep No-dine for protection against old maids, their lovers and such annoying things."

"If I haven't already leveled your head to the dust I shall spend some money to accomplish that purpose," said the infuriated Maude. "I'll make you want to leave this community, you brazen, baby-faced thing!"

"Take you that!" and another blue plate came whirling through the air.

At this performance Doll laughed heartily. Then she said: "Good-night, Miss Hill. I would ask you to call again, but I have not much use for a person who would borrow a neighbor's revolver with which to kill her paramour and, having accomplished this noble deed, fails to return it. Be careful, Miss Hill—be careful. The next person who is arrested for the murder of Frank Daniels is apt to be convicted. Then you may have the opportunity to tell the public about the man who betrayed you years ago—who came to see you later on—how he then promised to right your wrong, but, in the very face of it, asked another woman to marry him, making himself so odious in running after her that she threatened his life in order to keep him away. He made another call, at an untimely hour; you, screened behind a tree, listend to him telling her of his love and beseeching her to marry him. Assuredly, you were behind the large tree in front; you did not pass on your horse, as you swore to falsely. You followed him to the spot where he was killed, trying to force him to marry you. You were the last person seen with him. I know this—when the time cames I shall have no trouble in proving it."

As she finished, her companion went white as death, staggered and leaned heavily against the door. Then, recovering herself, she fairly screamed:

"My father will kill you for this! You will find out who you are fooling with before you get through with this affair, you adventuress with the doll face!"

With this the caller vanished through the door, and Doll was relieved to feel that she had gone, for as she turned to the Indian girl she found her standing with another plate poised, and Doll thought it was well to save some of her dishes.

The next morning found Doll an early caller at Dud Henley's law office.

"Dud," she said, "I came to learn if you would take the case if I succeed in bringing the real criminal to justice.'

CHAPTER VIII.

"If you do what?" asked Dud, sharply.

"Well, you heard me."

Dud did not answer for a time. He sat looking straight before him and nervously twisting his small mustache. Finally he turned to her and said, almost pleadingly:

"Doll, take a friend's advice and let well enough alone. You were acquitted, with loud hurrahs; now be satisfied. You are clever, I know, and might manage to do something more in clearing yourself of this charge, which is, of course, the end in view. Certainly you have no idea of convicting another."

"I most certainly do. But, Dud Henley, of what do you mean to accuse me? Are you insinuating that I would try to put this crime upon an innocent person?"

"I don't know what to think, Doll—I don't know what to think. For heaven's sake don't ask me!"

"Well, I know what to think. You insist that I am guilty—but be careful, you may want to ask my forgiveness some day for having made me suffer so. Just knowing that you disbelieved in me, that you really suspected me of the crime, while all the time you pretended to the public that you believed me innocent as a vestal virgin, has caused me greater grief than anything connected with this unfortunate affair——"

"Don't Doll—for God's sake, don't talk in this way! It hurts me more than you can ever realize to know that any act of mine has given you one moment's pain. Tell me, why do you insist that I have no faith in you?"

"Why, Dud, how crazy you talk! From the very fact that you object to my going into this case again shows clearly what you must think."

"No, no, not necessarily."

"Well, then, what could be your objection. I'll vow I can't see—perhaps I am stupid."

Dud looked confused and stammered:

"Well, all there is to it is this: You were acquitted, you were cleared of the charge. What do you care who killed the man? He was nothing to you nor any one else, much, and no doubt the world is better off with him out of it."

"Yes, while all that may be true, Dud, you know as well as I do that many about here still think I am the culprit. Would you, Dud, care to be in this position? Then the fact that you, yourself, doubt me, is enough to determine me to clear myself absolutely."

"I did not think you cared this much about my opinion, Doll," said Dud, huskily.

"Oh, Dud, you must have known that you were breaking my heart!" said Doll, with half a sob. Then as she looked up she saw Stanley standing in the door. She turned to him with a feeble little smile, and read in his face that he had misinterpreted her words.

"Oh, good morning, Doll," he said. "Beg your pardon, Dud, I didn't know that you were engaged. I will see you at another time."

"You can come right in now," said Doll. "It doesn't matter."

"I will see you a little later," called Dud.

"Understand, Dud," said Doll, bracing herself, "that I did not come here to ask you to believe in me—neither did I come to reproach you. You did all that you could for me outwardly, but your eyes told a tale that I couldn't bear to think about——"

"What—what do you mean?" gasped Dud.

"Let me finish what I was saying, Dud. So on that account I would not torture myself with seeing you when I could avoid it. A man who has so little confidence in me that he can't, or won't, look me in the eyes any more when he talks to me, I can't bear to be near."

Dud heaved a sigh and said: "I wouldn't knowingly have hurt you, Doll, but, really, I didn't know that you cared this much about me."

"Just as a friend, Dud, understand—as the best friend that I believed I had out here. I esteemed you more highly than any one. I admired and liked you a heap, and after all our jolly times together, to think you would believe this—this, of me!"

"Don't say anything more about it, Doll. You are not the only one who has suffered. But if I have wronged you in any way, I shall be glad to atone. Tell me what you want me to do?"

"Suspend judgment for a time; do not discourage Stanley in his love for me, and when I land the criminal, stand by me and help convict him—I shall make no mistake."

As she said this Dud got up and commenced to nervously pace the floor. Finally he said:

"Anything that I can do to aid you, be assured that I shall do. May I ask whom you suspect?"

"Why, didn't I tell you—isn't that just like me! Why, I suspect Maude Hill, of course."

"The devil you do—that is, pardon me, Doll, but why do you suspect her? She was dead in love with the fellow, wasn't she?"

"Haven't women ever killed the men they loved, Dud?"

"Oh, yes, yes; there have been such cases."

"Well, this is one of those cases, and I

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The True Story of The Invention of Wilson's Common Sense Ear Drums Told by Geo. H. Wilson, the Inventor.

I was deaf from infancy. Eminent doctors, surgeons and ear specialists treated me at great expense and yet did me no good. I tried all the artificial appliances that claimed to restore hearing, but they failed to benefit me in the least. I even went to the best specialists in the world, but their efforts were unavailing. My case was pronounced incurable!

I grew desperate; my deafness tormented me. Daily I was becoming more of a recluse, avoiding the companionship of people because of the annoyance my deafness and sensitiveness caused me. Finally I began to experiment on myself, and after patient years of study, labor, and personal expense, I perfected something that I found took the place of the natural ear drums, and I called it Wilson's Common Sense Ear Drum, which I now wear day and night with perfect comfort, and do not even have to remove them when washing. No one can tell I am wearing them, as they do not show, and as they give no discomfort whatever, I scarcely know it myself.

With these drums I can now hear a whisper. I join in the general conversation and hear everything going on around me. I can hear a sermon or lecture from any part of a large church or hall. My general health is improved because of the great change my Ear Drums have made in my life. My spirits are bright and cheerful. I am a cured, changed man.

Since my fortunate discovery it is no longer necessary for any deaf person to carry a trumpet, a tube, or any other such old-fashioned makeshift. My Common Sense Ear Drum is built on the strictest scientific principles, contains no metal, wires, or strings of any kind, and is entirely new and up to date in all respects. It is so small that no one can see it when in position, yet it collects all the sound waves and focuses them against the drum head, causing you to hear naturally and perfectly. It will do this even when the natural ear drums are partially or entirely destroyed, perforated, scarred, relaxed, or thickened. It fits any ear from childhood to old age, male or female, and aside from the fact that it does not show, it never causes the least irritation, and can be used with comfort day and night without removal for any cause.

With my device I can cure deafness in any person, no matter how acquired, whether from catarrh, scarlet fever, typhoid or brain fever, measles, whooping cough, gatherings in the ear, shocks from artillery, or through accidents. My invention not only cures, but at once stops the progress of deafness and all roaring and buzzing noises. The greatest aural surgeons in the world recommend it, as well as physicians of all schools. It will do for you what no medicine or medical skill on earth can do.

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will prove it to you if you will be a little patient and try to place some confidence in my judgment."

"I certainly do, Doll. I have always said you had the levelest head of any woman that I ever knew. So Stanley has told you that he cares for you?"

"Yes."

"Well, I certainly wish you happiness, Doll, but I am sorry that you told me. Doll, when I see you and talk with you I forget all the world beside. I only know that I care more for you than for any living thing. I had thought perhaps you cared for me at one time, but I suppose it was my conceit."

"Why, Dud, I am surprised that you tell me this now. I cannot say what would have come of our acquaintance had not this—this trouble made the gulf between us. But since it has all passed, why refer to it? All is over between us in that respect, and it is well enough that the affair was nipped in the bud, for the sake of my future happiness as well as your own. The man who could hope to hold my affections must be of different mould than yourself. I venture, Dudley, that your self-love is far greater than that which you might feel for any woman——"

"Go on, Doll, I suppose I deserve it, but it comes hard. It was weak of me to mention my feelings for you—miserably weak, since it could do no good now, or ever. Men make fools of themselves sometimes, you know—I—I—oh, I wonder if a man were ever placed as I am, Doll—but there, you had better go—you had better go, Doll."

"Yes, I am going, Dud. There, don't feel so bad about what I said—you look as white as death, Dud—like you were going to faint or something. Can I do anything for you."

"No, thank you, Doll—I shall be feeling better in a moment. I just have a mean headache this morning, that is all."

"And to think how I have been annoying you!" said Doll, who was all sympathy and forgiveness. "I shall not come again until I have something worth relating. In the meantime, there is nothing to stand in the way of our friendliness, Dud. Come out with Stanley at any time—it is lonely evenings."

"Yes, it would be a holy lark to go and see some other fellow worshiping you, who has a better right," thought Dud as he listened to Doll's feet pattering down the stairs. Thank you, I am not caring to have it rubbed in in that way. Besides, I can't see Doll without loving her to death and thus enhancing my misery. Misery is the name for my sufferings these days! So Doll thinks Maude Hill is the one who killed the man! I wonder what she knows. That she saw the man that night and talked with him I haven't a doubt. In fact——"

His musings were here interrupted by Stanley's return, and the two fell to talking on some business project which they had in view.

Doll hurried home with great misgivings. She regretted that Stanley had heard only that part of their conversation. "He evidently will think I am heels over head in love with Dud, and a flirt, as he often calls me. 'Tis true, I liked Dud pretty well at one time; he is a handsome, intelligent and interesting fellow. I was fast falling in love with him, there isn't a doubt. Well, it isn't hard for a woman who married a man like Joe, and who was treated as I was by him, to easily form an attachment for the first manly man that presents himself. That is what Dud seemed to me until—until this matter came up. But since knowing Stanley I am far better able to judge of one's manliness. Dud isn't to me mentioned in the same breath with Stanley. Stanley is a god, that's what he is! I would hate like everything to be tied up to a man like Dud. It is very evident that the world's opinion is the paramount thought with him, and should his wife be criticised, then the domestic cup of bliss would be hurriedly upset. With Stanley it is different. Here is a man who will stand on his own convictions until death be with him! Any one might know this to look at him. What honesty beams from his fine eyes, and what a soul back of them! Oh, Stanley, Stanley, I am all but worshiping you! To think you have the courage to ask a woman to bear your name when so many look upon me as they do, is truly noble of you! I appreciate it, though—yes, I do, and some day I shall make all this goodness up to you, Stanley Horton. I'll be the most devoted wife a man ever had. What a comfort it is in this dark hour to possess the love of such a one! I thank my Heaven for this blessing."

It was with such thoughts that Doll walked along the hot, dusty road to the cabin. Its coolness and cleanliness proved very refreshing. No-dine had just brought a fresh bucket of water from the spring, and, filling the dipper, Doll drained its contents. Then she called Robin and handed him some stick candy to divide with the Indian girl.

"Has any one been here since I left?" asked Doll, as she seated herself in the large rocker.

"She brought a letter," said the maid, going to a drawer and producing one.

It proved to be a threatening note from Maude Hill, which Doll simply glanced at and then tore into bits.

"I must take a good rest, then dress in my gypsy attire and go down to the river again," she thought. "I shall manage to get the rest out of her this time, if plotting will do it. I believe I will make a trinket of some sort and call it a charm that will protect criminals from their enemies. That ought to fetch her. People are generally credulous concerning such things, even though they do scoff at them. I think you will play into my hands all right, Miss Maude."

It was late in the evening, when the sun was low, that Doll stepped from her cabin in her gypsy attire. No-dine had many things in the way of colored bandanas, beads, shawls, etc., which Doll made use of. She darkened her skin with cork, also the hair which she pulled about her face, half covering it. When she was quite ready, she reached for a bundle done up in a large red bandanna, and a neck of soiled cards, then hurried through the back door of her cabin down to the stream.

She had not long to wait. Soon she saw the familiar sight of Maude Hill and her pony, a little distance away. As she drew near, Doll rose and beckoned to her, then withdrew into the trees again, that they might not be seen from the roadway.

CHAPTER IX.

When she had tied her pony to a tree the rider saluted the supposed gypsy and said:

"I have been looking for you all afternoon. I expected you earlier."

Assuming the speech and manner of the wandering tribe, Doll pretended to feel badly to have thus kept her waiting, explaining that she came far—very far—and could get there no sooner.

"Well, hurry and give me your advice at once; you know I am in need of it," said the credulous girl, as she seated herself on the ground.

"I have walked far—my charges will be a dollar this time," said Doll. "Cross my hand with silver, fair lady."

"But I paid you a quarter."

"I can tell but few things for so small a sum, lady. I am the gypsy Leah—you must have heard of Leah—she never makes mistakes. She tells one's past and future. With her charms she removes all troubles and enemies, brings about speedy marriages and makes peaceful one's whole future life."

"Very well, then, here is the money and——"

"Cross my hand so, lady—that is right," and as Doll shuffled the cards the girl resumed:

"Tell me all—everything—that you see in my past and future—leave nothing untold, whatever it may be."

The gypsy shook her head and said:

"Leah keeps those things to herself which it will do no one any good to tell."

"But I insist you must tell me all—all."

"Very well, fair lady, but you may not wish to hear—I will tell you, though, whatever I see in the cards."

When she had done shuffling the cards she asked her companion to cut them and make a wish; then they were laid upon the grass, as before.

She shook her head sorrowfully and said:

"I see trouble, trouble, trouble ahead—I will take your hand. There are many lines in the hand that tell as much, or more, than the cards." Immediately she dropped the hand and, shrugging her sholuders, said: "There is a stain upon that hand—oh, I see what makes the trouble—I see you, too, in a crowd. It seems to be some public building—a church—no; a courtroom—yes, it is a courtroom with the Judge. Some one is on trial for murder—it is you—no, no, it is another. I get you confused—it should have been you. I also——"

"You speak falsely. There is no such stain on my hand—I should not have been the one on trial for the murder——"

"Don't interrupt, don't interrupt, you break the spell—I see you take the stand—you tell lies to put the deed on another. You——"

"Stop, stop—I won't listen!"

"Ah! I told you, fair lady, there was that to disclose which you would not want to hear. Shall I tell you more?"

"Yes, go on; you are wrong—but tell me all, however bad it may be. What do you suppose I paid you the dollar for? But you must tell me the truth."

"Leah never speaks falsely—Leah is your friend. She will advise you what to do to save yourself, but you must help her to do so and not try to deceive her. Leah must know all in order to understand and cast the evil spell over your enemies. I will run the cards again, to see if they tell the same as the hand—there may be some mistake.

"No, the cards tell right—they speak with the palm. You tried to convict an innocent person. She stood in your way at some time. There was trouble between you—am I not right, lady?"

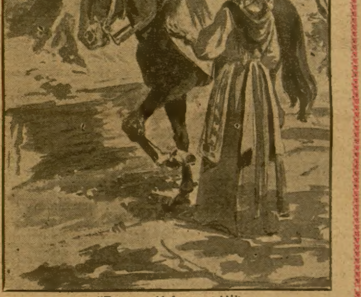
"Yes," faltered the girl.

"She came between you and your lover—am I right?"

"Yes, yes—go on."

"I see them standing in the monolight before a cabin door. You are near—you listen. He tries to persuade her to become his wife—she says no. He holds her fast and kisses her. She strikes him in the face. He turns angrily and leaves her. I see you slip along behind the man—ah! the hand trembles, lady—the hand that killed your lover."

"No, I did not—I say I did not kill him! We only quarreled. She is the one who killed him. I told him what I thought of him for asking her to marry him and of trying to throw me over. I told him he dare not refuse to keep his promise to me. He tried to excuse himself and get away. He took out his watch to see the time. My picture was in the lid. I was infuriated, and told him he ought to have her picture in it instead. With this he tore mine out and handed it to me. I insisted that he marry me on the following day. He declared he would not; then I drew back and hit him in the face as hard as ever I could, saying I would give him a worse one than she did. As I started to run away he grabbed me by the hair that had fallen down over my shoulders. That is all. I did not kill him."



"Fortun. told, fortune told!"

"Then you didn't know that she did—you only swore against her to protect yourself, fearing that you might be suspected—is that it?"

"Yes, and because I hated her. I believe, too, that she did do it—who else could?"

"Ah! but Leah knows many things—she knows that you tell her untruths. I see you hitch your pony on the outside and slip into her cabin. You take the revolver, thinking she might carry out a threat made against your lover's life. At the time you did not expect to use it yourself, but in the heat of temper you shot him with it. Am I not right, lady?"

"No, you are wrong about everything."

"Then if Leah is wrong she cannot aid you, for if this be not true of you, some other one committed the deed, and I must find her. I am guided by a spirit and sent to search for the one whose hand is stained with blood. If you insist that Leah is all wrong—Leah, who never before made a mistake—she must hunt for the other one, the guilty one, and carry to her this charm. 'Tis a charm to protect her from her enemies, from the gallows. Some one near here, I am on the right track, is to be tried for this murder and she will be convicted. But you say you are not——"

"Oh, you don't mean it—you don't see in the future such frightful, such hideous things!"

"Yes, the gallows; and it is the card that faces and is nearest you. Such trouble is now threatening you—your enemies are at work to bring you to justice."

"I am not guilty, I swear I am not, but she is a shrewd one and might succeed in putting the crime upon me—and you could cast a charm over my life—that is, so my enemies could do me no harm?"

"Oh, no, not you—if you are not the one."

"But wouldn't you sell me this charm?"

[Continued on Page Seven.]

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Love may intoxicate a man, but marriage sobers him.

A woman isn't necessarily a thief because she hocks a dress.

In Utah they do not appear to see anything singular about plural wives.

No, Cordelia, the relict of a man who died of hay fever isn't a grass widow.

If this strain keeps up the Czar may feel inclined to raise his own salary.

A woman is almost as much afraid of a mouse as a man is of a millinery bill.

What a jolly old world this would be if all men practiced what they preach!

Some men have a keen sense of humor, judging by the pointless stories they tell.

If a woman has a pretty face no man on earth can tell you what kind of clothes she has on.

Port Arthur does not appreciate those little favors that Japan is sending in on the half-shell.

The man who manages to keep out of debt, out of jail and out of politics is a little above the average.

China isn't particularly interested, but it would like to dump Russia into the wash and run it through the wringer.

In pronouncing General Pflug the P is silent, but unless he makes good we may transform F into the silent letter.

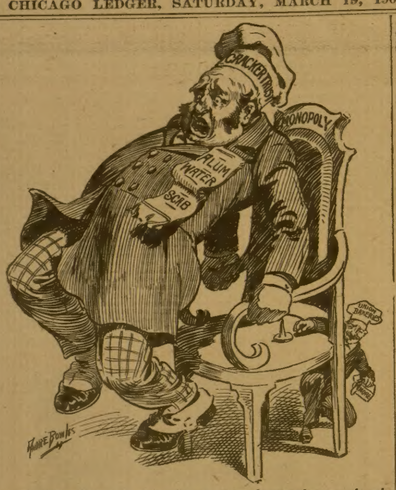
It is said that the Japanese have no swear-words, but the Russians probably more than make up the deficiency.

While the Dreyfus case remains unsettled France does not mean to be entirely overshadowed even if there is a big war in progress.

Should Russians still find it disagreeably cold at Port Arthur it is not because Togo is not doing his best to make it hot for them.

Dew baths are a fad in New York, which always did like cheap pleasure, notwithstanding its desire to create the impression that it never has to think about the money end of its fun.

Probably the Administration is prudent in sending so many warships to the Pacific. The Pacific is a large ocean and there is much more room there than elsewhere for ships to move around without bumping into one another.



The Union Bakers, by demanding that store keepers place on sale only crackers bearing the union label, have caused the Dough Trust to "rise."

A CRIMSON TRAGEDY;

Or, The Mystery of a Damascus Dagger.

BY CONSTANCE BEATRICE WILLARD.

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Begun in No. 9, Feb. 27. Subscriptions can begin with that issue, or back copies can be obtained from news stands, or our agents, or by mail from office of publication.

CHAPTER XII.

The sick-room was darkened, but even in the dim light the beautiful face of Gabriele Darrell looked frightfully drawn, and the proud head drooped as its owner sat silently by the side of the father, who, fortunately, had not sufficiently recovered to know of the dark shadow hanging over his only daughter. The white hands were clenched until the nails made deep imprints upon the pink flesh, and the firm white teeth bit nervously at the rich red lips. What was this lovely girl thinking of as she sat there? Was she reviewing the past? Who was uppermost in her thought, the fair-haired lover from whom she had parted the night before, or the memory of the murdered man?

Suddenly she rose to her feet, pushing back her heavy hair from her temples, and, going to the window, pulled aside the curtain and looked out drearily. It was a perfect day, such as comes at times in August, as peaceful and calm as one in June; a day when the breezes promise a new summer, and the harvest sun is tempered by a few light fleecy clouds. How familiar the scene was to her, who had been born in this very room! She knew every step of the way from her father's mansion to any portion of the town. Every person in it was known to her, the mayor's daughter upon whom rested the charge of murder.

She shuddered violently and glanced at her white hands.

"Stained with that man's blood," she whispered. "Stained forever with his blood. Still, I did not mean it—I did not. Oh, Father in Heaven, have mercy, have mercy! I have been so foolish, so willful, proud of my beauty and position, and yet I never intended any wrong."

The young face looked very pitiful, and the lips trembled, but no tears appeared in the deep eyes. If she had shed tears, their very source seemed dried now.

"'A life for a life!' Ah! but that will not atone. Instead of death, a criminal should have life—life long stretched out—in which to undo by deeds of charity, acts of penance and complete renunciation, the wrong committed. Give me that. It is all I ask. I will not murmur, however heavy the load, provided I am given time—time."

Again the proud head was bowed, and the pride of the girl seemed humbled in the very dust.

A tap on the door aroused her, and, crossing the room, she opened it. All the old haughtiness had returned to her face as she took from the hands of the servant a note.

"Who brought this?" she asked before opening it.

"A boy from the village—Snaggs," returned the servant respectfully, for no matter what reports might be whispered about, he was too well trained to display any lack of due reverence for his stately young mistress.

Without a quiver of the young face, or a motion to denote her anguish, Gabriele opened the note and read these words:

"Be at the home of Dr. Prince this evening at 7:30, sharp. R. K."

"Is the boy waiting?"

"No, Miss Gabriele; he said there was no answer."

"Very well; thank you," was the quiet answer, and the door closed upon a white-faced, agonized woman, who staggered across the room to her father's bedside, to sit shivering and trembling by his side, whispering:

"Oh, give me courage, give me courage to bear this as I ought! Keep me from breaking down! Oh, merciful Father in Heaven, help me, for there is no one below who can!"

CHAPTER XIII.

Snaggs was eating his evening meal, and a very good one it was, for when one has a grandchild whose name is mentioned in connection with the leading people of the town, it is worth while to cook carefully.

Mrs. Johnson's pride in Snaggs was hourly increasing, but naturally she had curiosity and desired it gratified. Probably she figured upon obtaining his gratitude, and consequently his confidence, by catering to his little stomach, but this time she scarcely understood her subject.

"Honey, won't you have just another tiny piece of chicken?" she asked, as she looked at the boy's plate.

"Yes'm," Snaggs replied, his mouth full. "Granny's dreadful stuck up about her boy."

Snaggs ate on, dropping gravy unheeded and unchided all over himself.

"She don't see much of her boy nowadays, does she?"

"Nope, and didn't other days if you could help it," was the ungracious answer.

"Come now, Honey, you don't hold no grudge 'cause Granny's had to whip you sometimes?"

"Not specially."

"I say, Snaggie, darling," she began, when that worthy looked up from his plate.

"Cut that, now."

"Cut what, precious one?"

"Callin' me Snaggie."

"All right, precious child. Granny won't say nothing her boy don't want."

"Better not," this too low for her to hear, however.

"Say, Snaggs."

"Well, what?"

"Miss Jones was in here this afternoon, and she is just crazy to know about things."

"What things?"

"About the murder. I didn't let her know that I wasn't in her secrets, but it hurt me powerful like that I couldn't tell her nothing."

Snaggs stopped eating, and, resting his dirty little face on his dirtier hands, his elbows, unrebuked, on the table, asked gravely:

"People that don't know nothing can't say nothing, can they?"

"That they can't, son."

"Well, you weren't to blame, then, were you?"

"But, Snaggs, ain't you going to tell your Granny, what has raised you up from a squalling baby, what you have been doing?"

Again Snaggs paused in his meal, and, gazing reflectively at the ceiling, remarked in very audible tones:

"If I don't quit losing teeth I'll be plumb obliged to take to slops, I will, and with all these good eatin's, too," and he shook his head mournfully.

"You don't answer your Granny."

"Answer what?"

"All about things."

Snaggs gave a deep sigh, then pushing back his plate and sliding out of his chair, he stood before her, grinning, showing a marvelous expanse of red gums from which, alone and solitary, protruded a great, snow-white tooth, like a tusk.

"I'm busy," Snaggs remarked pleasantly, "so hurry and get through."

"I say, now, who did the murdering."

With a chuckle Snaggs evaded her grasp and answered with a skip of joy:

"The person what done it," and darted through the door; then, returning, handed her a letter.

"What's this?"

"Letter." That one tooth really looked fearful, now that the several blackened little snags which had surrounded it were gone.

After a somewhat prolonged hunt for her glasses, which she finally found on the back of the stove where she had evidently laid them in a fit of absent-mindedness, Mrs. Johnson adjusted them carefully and, opening the envelope with a buttery knife, read:

"Mrs. Johnson.—Dear Madam: After due consideration I have decided to take your grandson back with me when I return to the city tomorrow morning. I promise you that I will see that the boy is well taken care of and that he is trained so that he may earn an honest living. Kindly have him ready to accompany me on the 10:30 train tomorrow morning. Yours respectfully, ROBERT KEATING."

The old lady sat gazing at the letter and then at Snaggs, in perfect bewilderment. Finally she asked:

"Snaggs, what does this mean?"

"Mean, Granny? Why, it means that the greatest detec. in the world is going to give me a chance—a real chance. I won't have to stay here where every one is throwing it in my face that my folks ain't worth nothing, and be licked by you, and taken to church 'stead of going fishing."

Mrs. Johnson was one of those persons who, no matter how astonished she might be for a few moments by the course of events, could always rise to the occasion, and Snaggs' concluding words gave her the needed clew. Rising with a dignified air, she said, with solemnity:

"Washington Daniel Lincoln William Joseph Johnson, don't you forget for one moment who has made you. If I hadn't have taken you to church last Thursday morning, I'd like to know where you'd be now."

Snaggs was stunned for a moment, then his natural wit came to the surface.

"In my skin, I expect."

"You Snaggs!" the old woman cried, forgetting her dignity and his newly-acquired position, and aiming a blow at his head.

The boy evaded her descending hand with ease, and as he flew out the door said:

"No more Snaggs after I get from this here place, 'cause I'm going to be W. D. L. W. J. Johnson then."

Ah! Snaggs, a nickname is sometimes easier to acquire than to dispose of, as you may find out in your after life.

CHAPTER XIV.

About 2 o'clock that afternoon Dr. Prince had been handed a note which read:

"I will meet you people in your library tonight, when I will lay in your hands all my clews and tell you the solution of the mystery. Eight, prompt. Yours,
"KEATING."

The chief was bidden to the meeting over the same signature, and a similar letter was sent to Bruneval's office and was finally delivered to him by Snaggs, as he lay on the couch in Dr. Prince's library, too ill to move as yet.

The letter to Willis was longer, and ended with these words:

"I have summoned Miss Darrell to be at the doctor's at 7:30. Get Bruneval there at the same hour. Tell her that I have gone after the murderer. Tell him that she is innocent, then let them meet. Willis, this being a detective is mighty hard work sometimes."

Obeying instructions to the letter, Mr. Willis simply showed the concluding words of his communication to Dr. Prince, then, as he saw the tall figure of the heiress coming up the walk, whispered:

"Keep her here a minute," then slipped into the library.

Bruneval was lying on his back, staring up at the ceiling, as motionless as though asleep. The light was turned very low, but even in the dimness the coroner could discern the deep lines upon the face, which thirty years of living, work and hard study had not traced. First flooding the room with light, he advanced to the lounge and said brusquely:

"What's the matter?"

The honest blue eyes shifted their gaze to the weather-beaten face before them, then Bruneval said, lifelessly:

"Collapse, Prince says. Curse it all! He won't let me move. Says I must rest here until tonight, when we are to meet Keating again," and he stirred restlessly, raising himself upon his arm.

"Len, old man," Willis said kindly, "I've had a message from Keating."

"Well," the young man was evidently struggling hard to maintain his composure.

"He sent you a message."

"Stop a moment, Willis. You are chairman of the committee. Get me a pen and paper; or, stay—I can get it myself," and before the coroner knew what he was doing, the young man threw off the light robe which covered him, and, staggering across the room to a desk in the corner, sat down and started to write.

"What are you doing now?" asked the good man in amazement.

"Writing my resignation, Willis. For God's sake, take it, however informal. You know how it is. I simply cannot keep it under existing conditions," and he dropped his head in his hands and groaned.

"What existing circumstances?"

"Have you no mercy, man alive? Do you suppose I have no heart? I would rather kill myself than act in my official capacity against the woman I love dearer than my life."

Light began to dawn upon the coroner.

"Why, I never in all the bluenations heard of such a tangle. I say, now, listen, my boy," bringing those jaws together with mighty emphasis. "Bob Keating told me to say to you that Gabriele Darrell is innocent."

The District Attorney stared up into the other man's face in wild-eyed amazement; then, clutching his arm, he cried:

"In the name of God, man, don't play with me—don't!"

"Bob Keating never plays. That is as true as gospel."

A new energy was infused in Leonard Bruneval's veins. Springing to his feet, he cried:

"Quick, stand aside, I must go to her!"

The large but kindly hand of his companion was laid upon the other's arm.

"Gabriele is in the other room. Let me speak a word to her, and I'll send her in," and he vanished, walking on tiptoe as though afraid of disturbing some one.

Pale as death, but composed and stately, Gabriele Darrell sat awaiting her fate. None of the anguish of the afternoon was present, no trace remained save the extreme pallor of her face and heavy shadows under eyes which had not closed for many a weary hour.

"Gabriele," the coroner's voice was more gentle than any one had ever heard it before.

She turned.

"Is Mr. Keating ready for me?" she breathed.

"Mr. Keating is not here yet, but he sent you a message through me."

"Yes," the nervous fingers were twisting a dainty handkerchief, but otherwise there was no sign of the terrible strain the girl was under.

"He wrote me to tell you that he had gone after the murderer, and to send you into the library to Bruneval."

Miss Darrell sprang from her seat.

"What! Repeat what you said—I do not understand."

"It's all right, my girl; go to Bruneval—he needs you. Keating has discovered the real criminal."

He has gone after him—where?"

"I don't know, but it will be all right. Bob Keating knows more than any one gives him credit for, and we can't deceive him much, my girl."

"And my poor Len is in there?"

"As anxious to see you as you him," the coroner replied, opening the door. There was a quick swirl of silken skirts, a glad cry from two people, and he saw Leonard Bruneval catch his sweetheart in his arms. Then he closed the door and resolutely walked away from it.

CHAPTER XV.

"Explain, darling. I cannot understand. It seems like some frightful nightmare. What made you take the stand you did?"

Gabriele Darrell raised her glorious eyes to her lover's face as she replied:

"To save you."

"To save me?"

A tremor seized the girl who had been so brave when danger threatened, who was on the verge of breaking down now that the necessity for dissembling was gone.

"Here, sweetheart, take a chair. There, are you perfectly comfortable?"

"Perfectly," she answered, smiling at him through tears which would start.

Where were the signs of collapse now?

"Why did you think I needed saving, darling?"

"Len, a life of devotion will not make up for the awful wrong I have done you, but I thought you guilty."

The young man looked at her in perfect amazement.

"You thought me guilty?" he gasped.

"Yes, yes, yes—oh, forgive me, but I did!"

"But Gabriele, dearest, you told me that you were guilty."

"So I believed myself in a measure, for I believed that I had made you two deadly rivals, and, although I could not explain, I felt certain that in some way or other you had met, why in the church I could not study out, and that yours was the hand which struck the blow."

"But, darling, with your dagger?"

"Do you remember that night, the last one of the bazaar we held in the church, when I appeared as Herod's daughter?"

"And I took you home? Yes."

"Well, if you remember, you admired the dagger, and I gave it to you to take with you to examine."

"But that was a month or so ago."

"Of course, but, Len, I could not remember your returning it."

"But I did, dear one, several weeks ago, when you were out."

"Who took it?"

"Elsie." Then, after a moment's thought: "Oh, I say, Gabriele, just as I handed it to her, Sylvestor came up and, looking at it, remarked upon its beauty and value, and your not being in we walked away together and I spoke of your collection."

There was silence for a moment when these two united lovers clung to each other, happy beyond any question, and yet still wondering.

"How did it happen you were there at all?" Leonard was the first to speak.

With a gentle face, suffused with blushes, Gabriele replied by telling him briefly what she had said to the detective, and then added:

"When I reached the church to my surprise the chancel was dimly lighted and as I approached to discover the cause I saw him lying there. Darling, it was too terrible!" and she shivered.

"Go on, love," whispered Bruneval, his lips softly touching her cheek, his arm protectingly about her.

"Of course I knelt beside him to see if he were really dead, and then I saw a handkerchief lying beside him, as though dropped by the murderer. Leonard, I picked it up, and your name was written across one corner."

"Why, darling!"

"Can you wonder that I was frightened out of my wits? Then my brain began to work. I seemed to see it all. At first I was going to give the alarm, but the thought came that I must not be seen on the spot, or your name might be connected with the deed. I started down the aisle, when I remembered that he had my picture and some of my notes to him, merely social notes, but mine, and that he had told me he carried them in his pocket."

"Wait a moment, dear; where did he get that photograph?"

"I think he must have taken it from the drawing-room. I had several in a drawer of the cabinet. You know I did not give him one," reproachfully.

"Forgive me; go on," and she continued:

"It was simply awful. I wonder I did not fall dead right there. Len, they were in his pocket, all wet with blood, and I had to tear the photograph away from the dagger."

"And why is it that you did not take away the dagger?"

"Len, it may appear strange, but I never recognized it, my thoughts were so occupied, my senses dulled, and then the light was dim. I caught up your handkerchief and the papers and rushed off home. After I had managed to rouse myself I missed my handkerchief, but did not know that it was stained until it was shown to me by Mr. Keating."

"And you took the burden upon yourself, my brave little girl, to save me? Why, darling, what kind of a man would I have been to have stood by and allowed them to accuse my promised wife of my own crime? And you could love me believing I was such a dastard?" looking straight into the soft eyes.

"Yes, dear, for when a woman gives her love once it is forever. It made no difference. I could not change matters, and I believed that I was half guilty, dearest, because of my foolishness in trying to play with edged tools."

"But, darling, those papers and your photograph—why was it that you did not destroy them?"

"How do you know that I did not?" turning a pale face toward him.

"Because I found them."

"Where?"

"Caught under the steps as I was going away that terrible Thursday. I saw them and went back after dusk to secure what I felt might tell horribly against you."

Gabriele's eyes opened wide at this.

"Then you believed me guilty, too?"

Bruneval bowed his head.

"Oh, my poor darling, and you District Attorney!"

"That was the awfulness of it. See here, I was just writing this when Willis told me that Keating said you were innocent," holding up the letter he had begun.

"Len!"

"What, Gabriele?"

"Your handkerchief!"

"True, that is something I cannot explain."

"Nor I, either."

"I can,' 'sounded a voice from the door, and, turning, the two saw the detective standing with a very grave face in the open doorway.

Another installment of this strong and thrilling story will appear in next week's Ledger. The management makes a gift of a camera or free patterns to any one who forwards a subscription to this paper. Please note the announcement on pages thirteen and fifteen.

An Oklahoma Mystery.

[Continued from Page Five.]

"No, no—money could not buy it, fair lady. It is for the one in trouble. I must seek her out. It must go to none other than the one who committed the deed. The spirits whispered it to me when they directed me to make the charm. It is from the heart of an infant, which always means purity, peace and happiness. The spirit whispered, Go, Leah, seek the one who commited the crime. It is a woman. Place the charm around her neck. Make no mistake. It will save her from the gallows.'"

"Oh, what shall I do—what shall I do!" moaned the listener. "Is my enemy trying to get evidence against me?"

"That she is. She is a sleuth—she will leave nothing undone."

"And if I really were the one, this charm placed around my neck would protect me against her? You could do this for me?"

"This Leah can do—Leah is sent to guard you. She is wont to save the just. If he did you a wrong, you did right to kill him and should not suffer for it. The charm will destroy your enemies, bring peace and happiness and a speedy marriage with the one you desire. All this it will do."

"What! bring to me the one I would like to marry?"

"Yes, by wearing this no one could keep him from you. There is some one?"

"Yes. I met him here on the river, and he much admired me. She—my enemy—must have told him tales about me. I have not seen him since."

"Let me run the cards again. Yes, yes, you are right. I see the fair young man facing you. He has a merry smile and a gentle way with him. He sees you—yes, and is captivated with your manner and beautiful form. She lures him to her den."

"And by wearing this—this charm, I could get him from her—he would come to me again?"

"Oh, yes, yes, lady—as I have so often told you before. It brings peace, happiness, love, a speedy marriage and protection. Ah! I hear the spirits whisper to me, 'This is the one—this is the one you are sent to save.'"

As the supposed gypsy spoke these words in a very impressive manner, her companion seemed deeply affected and cried out faintly. Then, putting her hands to her face she moaned: "What shall I do—what shall I do!" She sat silent for some time, then, suddenly raising her head, said:

"Put the charm about my neck, Leah—I am the one for whom it is intended."

"Not so fast, my friend. First swear to me that you are the one who killed your lover and tell me the circumstances connected with the crime."

A faint shudder passed through the girl's frame. Then she said:

"Let me recall it as well as I can. I met him several years ago, when spending my vacation in a small town in the State of New York. He wooed and promised to marry me. I got into trouble—you understand, he disgraced me in the eyes of my family. I returned home, and wrote him, threatening to sue him for breach of promise. For years he kept making excuses and putting me off. At last I determined to stand it no longer, and went on to see him. I engaged my lawyer; then he became frightened. It resulted in his saying that he would come here in the early spring and then we would be married. I urged him to come at once. I knew he had nothing saved up, but that didn't matter. I told him this was a good place for a poor man to get a start. Soon after this he came on. He came to marry me. As soon as she came here and he saw her, he was like one possessed—I couldn't keep him away from her. I was kind to him, while she abused him. Still he treated me shabbily and made love to her, telling me to do my worst. He was insulting and defied me, calling me a sour-faced old maid, and said that if I tried to force him to marry me he would ruin my reputation. Well, you know the rest—I followed him when he left her cabin that night, as I told you. He was found dead the next morning. Put the charm around my neck, Leah—you see it is intended for me, not for her."

As she bent her head the little silk bag was tied about her throat with a blue ribbon, and the girl asked: "It will bring him to me? He will turn from her and be her enemy instead of her friend?"

"That it will do, and much more. From now on you will lead a life of perfect bliss."

"And you will keep my secret, Leah?—else I would not have told you."

"Yes, Leah will keep your secret—the Evil One would strike her dead if she should give it up. You need have no fear. Good-by, and the Saints bless you!"

"Will you come to me again if I am in trouble?"

"Yes, yes; just call the name Leah, and the spirits will whisper it along—I live far, far from here."

Doll took a roundabout way to her hut, walking some distance east, before she turned down the road leading to it. She hurried, knowing that Stanley would be there very shortly. But just as she was about to enter the cabin she was surprised to see Dud walking along.

"Fortune told, fortune told?" she said.

"No, go 'long with you."

"Then you don't care to hear about the fortune that your uncle in the East is about to leave? He is very delicate."

"What can you tell me about it?"

"Everything; put in my hand a ten-dollar gold piece."

"Pshaw! you come too high for a beggar like me. Can't you make it fifty cents?"

"Well, seeing that it is you, perhaps I might," said Doll, in her own voice and manner.

"Great Jupiter, Doll! What are you up to now? Why are you masquerading in this way?"

"Oh, that is my secret; you wouldn't have known me then, Dud?"

"Not in a thousand years, you mink!" laughed Dud.

"How nice of you to accept my invitation and come to take dinner with us, Dud! We are late with it this evening. I suppose Stanley will be along pretty soon."

"I am very grateful, Doll, for the invitation, but I am bent on a little business errand. I may stop for a few moments on my return, if you are sure you would like to have me."

"Why, assuredly, Dud. Then I have something I wish to tell you about—something that will make you hold your breath a spell. I made hay this afternoon and have some startling things to disclose. I am sorry that you cannot stop now, and shall watch anxiously for your return."

"Can't you give me some idea of all this mystery, Doll? What is it about?"

"Oh, the old story. Maude Hill has made a confession."

"A confession? About what?"

"Why, the murder, of course, you stupid!"

"Y-you don't mean that of Frank Danleis?" gasped Dud with a note of surprise in his tones.

"Certainly. Who else could I mean? How incredulous you seem, Dud!"

"I haven't time to talk any longer now, Doll, but I will hurry back as soon as I can. I am anxious to hear about this."

While Doll was industriously at work trying to rid herself of her gypsy paraphernalia and the burnt cork, she could hear Stanley's voice on the outside, as he talked with Robin. She hurried into a fresh cambric and went to the door just as he was saying: "Come here, Bob, you rascal! Why are you so shy this evening? Come and see Stan; maybe he has something in his pockets."

"Stanley, you are spoiling him, as well as his digestion. You should not bring him so much candy, and you must not call him Bob. The idea of calling such a beautiful babe Bob and corrupting the pretty name that I was so long selecting!"

"I beg your forgiveness, Doll. It is Robin from now on. I'll never be guilty of the offense again. The candy happens to be figs and oranges this time."

"Sakes alive! Who has been importing such dainties?"

"I received a box of stuff from home this afternoon. Just such stuff as a girl would fix up. My sister seems to think I still have a sweet tooth. But Robin likes figs, don't you sonny?"

"You are making up nobly for calling him Bob, I see," laughed Doll. "Well, I must forgive you in the face of this atonement."

"You look as fresh as a dewdrop, Doll," and Stanley gazed long in admiration. "You little resemble the wanderer that I listened to this afternoon wring a confession from a sinner's lips."

"Were you near enough to hear all that was said, Stanley? I was so afraid she

[Continued on Page Eleven.]

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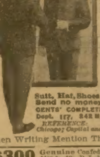

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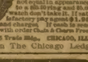

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An Urgent Case.

A happy couple were made one the other day, and it was learned subsequently that it had been a very "near thing" for the bride. Two months previous to the ceremony she told the object of her affections that she would not marry him until he had laid by $2,500. The young man set to work, became discouraged, and gradually ceased his visits. The lady became alarmed, but, meeting him shortly after, the following conversation ensued:

"Well Ned"—sighing—"how are you getting on?"

"Oh, first rate," cheerfully.

"Do—you—think you'll ever get it, Ned?"

"Oh, yes, in ten or twenty years."

"H-h-how much have you saved, dearest?"

"About two hundred dollars."

"Well, Ned, d-don't you think th-that will be enough?"

And so now they are happy.

The Madness of Hamlet.

Shakespeare had just produced "Hamlet."

"But tell me," asked the critic, "is the Dane really mad?"

"Not yet," replied the great poet, "but he will be when he has to walk the ties."

With a pitying glance into the future, Shakespeare shed a tear of sympathy for Hamlet.

He Knew.

'Josiah," said Mrs. Chugwater, "have you ever seen a bureau of information?"

"Yes."

"What does it look like?"

"You've seen a table of contents, haven't you?" heplied Mr. Chugwater, somewhat irritably. "Well, it looks like that, only its larger."

A woman has certainly reached the limit when she's so homely that automobile goggles are becoming to her.

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The Way to Wealth.

Spendthrift—I see nothing before me but poverty and disgrace.

Friend—How much have you left?

Spendthrift—Just fifty dollars.

Friend—That's plenty.

Spendthrift—Plenty?

Friend—A superfluity. Buy a paste-pot and shears. Tnen go over to London and start a comic paper.

A Fine Kidney Remedy.

Mr. A. S. Hitchcock, East Hampton, Conn. (The Clothier), says if any sufferer from Kidney and Bladder Disease will write him he will direct them to the perfect home cure he used. He makes no charge whatever for the favor.

And Both Stood Pat.

"Yes," said the shade of Columbus. "I'd enjoy a little game of whist, but we haven't any cards."

"Haven't, eh?" retorted Casabianca. "Why, I've got decks to burn."

He Wouldn't Do.

Railroad Superintendent—Yes, I have decided to open a bureau of information, for the accommodation of passengers who wish to know about trains, and I am looking for a good man to run it.

Applicant—Well, sir, I have been a railroad ticket agent for a good many years.

Superintendent—Then you won't do. I want a man who is accustomed to giving information.

Superstitious.

"I'm not at all surprised to get this poem back," remarked the long-haired gentleman as he extracted the manuscript from its envelope.

"Why aren't you surprised?" asked his other half.

"Because," he explained, "it was the thirteenth time I sent it out."

Feminine Charity.

She—You ought to have heard Miss Bellows sing "Home, Sweet Home" at the entertainment last night.

He—Did she render it with the necessary expression?

She—With even more expression than was necessary, I think. It made nearly everybody in the hall homesick.

Will Work Well.

Mrs. Strongmind (a few years hence)—I presume you are glad that your husband has been nominated.

Fair Guest—Indeed I am. It's just like old times, before we were married.

Mrs. Strongmind—In what way?

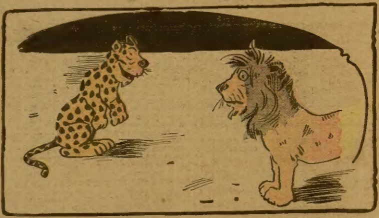
Fair Guest—He knows I have a vote, and he's just as devoted as a lover.

Absolute Rest.

Physician—Your husband must stop all work, all thought—everything.

Wife—He would never consent to absolute idleness.

Physician—Then we must fool him into imagining he is busy. I'll get him appointed a member of the Board of Health.



The Lion—If you don't stop your fooling, now, I'll knock the spots out of you!

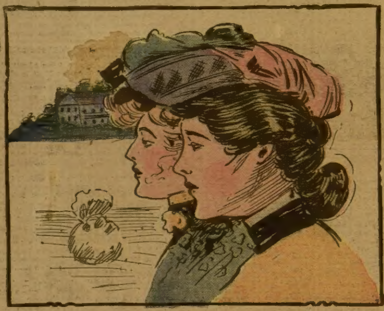
Getting Acclimated.

Gyer—I'm in training for a trip in search of the north pole.

Myer—In training?

Gyer—Yes; I'm living in a steam-heated flat now.

ANOTHER WAY.



"Mrs. Swells tells me she rubs alcohol on her lips to make them red."
"Swells uses the same agent to make his nose red, but he doesn't rub it on."

Half Day.

Mistress—Katie, why did you tear Thursday in half on the kitchen calendar?

Katie—Sure, ut's me afternoon off.

FOOD'S WORK

How It Cured Paralysis.

Paralysis comes from weak nerves and bad blood and is often cured nowadays by proper feeding.

"For fifteen years I was an invalid, haven't walked a step for over twelve years, not able to move my feet, or even my toes.

"But recently a wonderful thing has happened, for I had never expected to have the use of my limbs again; a four months' diet of Grape-Nuts Food for breakfast and supper made the change and now, just think of it, I can move my toes freely on my left foot and a little on the rignt foot, and can let the foot-piece on my chair down and swing my feet vigorously, which I think is a wonderful improvement for the time I have used the food.

"And that is not all! My blood and my stomach are so much better I am confident my trouble came from too much rich food and an overstrain of the nerves, but my nerves are much better, my mind is clearer and I don't forget things like I did. It must be the food, for I stopped taking medicine years ago for the paralysis.

"Of course I have the sympathy and prayers of many Christians, but it is wonderful what good pure food will do for one out of health, and why would it not be as good to keep one's health up? I have heard lots of others praise Grape-Nuts, but I for one cannot praise it enough." Name given by Postum Co., Battle Creek, Mich.

Here was a well-defined case of paralysis which came from weakened nerves and blood trouble, and which began yielding almost immediately when proper food, Grape-Nuts, was substituted for improper food. There's a reason.

Look in each package for the famous little book, "The Road to Wellville."

Classified.

Mifkins—Is that Congressman from your district a man of any distinction?

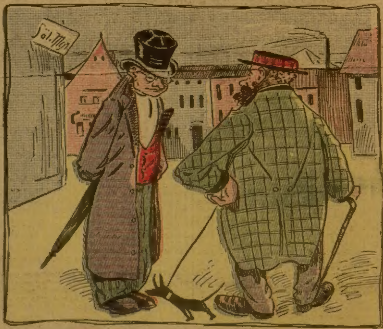
Bifkins—Not much; he's only mentioned as a vice-presidential possibility.

An Up-to-Date Physician.

Doctor—Dyspepsia is what ails you.

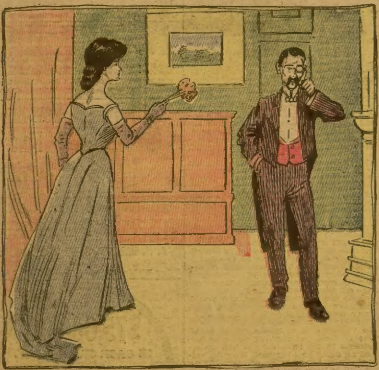
Patient—What do you advise?

Doctor—Fee the waiters.



"Ha, ha, Meyer, vot a fine rat you haf there by der string, alretty."
"You are a fool. Cannot you see it ist no rat?"
Ah, of course. Ha, ha, vot a mistook I made! I see now it ist a cockroach."

BOTH TITLES RIGHT.



Lord Eadward—Yaas, I told your fathah that I was Baron of Pokey-hole-on-the-wheeze. He said he'd always thought I was Baron of Ideas. Told him there was no such Baron in England. He seemed to think that was awfully funny, but I could see no joke.

The Childers' Bell.

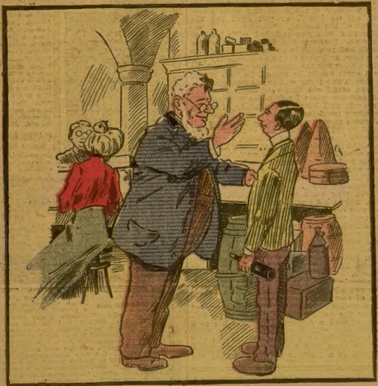
"Why do you ring that little bell, Teresa, after you've rung the large one?"

"Sure, mum, that's for the childer."

"They say that after seven rehearsals Charlie Swimmington actually stumbled through the wedding ceremony."

"Overtrained, I suppose."

TRADE SECRETS.



Employer (to new clerk)—You must remember we have three kinds of olive oil—pure olive oil, olive oil with cottonseed oil and pure cottonseed oil.

Facts in the Case.

"What is your name?" asked the inquisitive woman.

"Hungry Hawkins, ma'am," replied the half-starved hobo.

"Is that your real name?" she asked.

"Well, ma'am," answered the wanderer, "I must admit that it's what you might call an empty title at the present writing."

Proof Positive.

"Why, doctor," protested the indignant female, "you evidently believe that women haven't any brains."

"On the contrary, madam," replied the gruff M. D., "I have actually seen them at autopsies."

She—Ah, you men! Before marriage you pay compliments, but after——

He—After? Why, after—we do better; we pay the bills.

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AGENTS Sell advertising novelties; 25 per cent commission; 3 samples: Pencil Holder, Toothpick Case and Nail File, 10c. J. C. Kenyon, Owego, N.Y.
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Railroading to Matrimony.

BY JAMES WINTHROP.

"The walking isn't very good between here and Cartersville. Don't you think you could find your money?"

The conductor did not mean to be gruff, but he had to collect fares.

She turned a piteous face toward him. "I assure you I had a ticket when I boarded the train," she said. "My pocket must have been picked."

"I can't punch assurances," he retorted, gruffly. "I've got to turn in a ticket for your fare or you will have to get off at the next station."

"But my friends will meet me at the station," she pleaded. "They will pay you for the ticket and your trouble."

"Mebbe they will," he said, "but I don't take any chances on friends. If you can't find that purse before we pull into the junction you can stay there until your friends come and get you."

Then he passed on, leaving a very downcast and remarkably pretty young woman in seat thirteen of the chair car "Alma."

The brakes ground against the wheels and every sound seemed to Nellie Trennant to find an echo in her heart.

She was not used to traveling. Her destination was fifty miles beyond, and the next train would get her in there at 3 o'clock in the morning.

Just as the train came to a standstill the conductor hurried into the car. "Got your purse yet?" he demanded gruffly. She shook her head helplessly.

He grasped her shoulder and started to lift her from her seat. She gave a little cry of terror. A moment later the conductor was stretched at full length in the aisle and a muscular young man stood above him waiting for him to get up again.

The conductor seemed to think that this would be a waste of effort under the circumstances, and lay where he was until some of the passengers laid detaining hands upon his assailant.

He could see from the murmured threats of the other passengers that he had been too rough, and it was a humbler man who finally rose to his feet.

It required but a moment for the young man to settle the matter. Presently the train pulled out of the station with Nellie Trennant still a passenger, but this time with a ticket in her possession as well as a card reading, "Hugh Payson," and the information that he dealt in stocks and bonds.

As soon as he had arranged matters with the conductor he had skillfully disappeared that he might not appear to presume upon his action, and Nellie was not unappreciative of his delicacy.

At the Carterets her adventure was the leading feature of talk at the dinner table. Freddy Hamilton, it seemed, knew Payson very well. They had been classmates at college.

A dainty little note of thanks went to Payson with the returned loan, and the matter was dropped except for an occasional joke from Freddy about innocents abroad.

Then the visit came to an end, and she was placed on the train after the entire household had assured themselves that she was properly provided with both ticket and funds.

When she had time to look around she noticed with a gasp that the car was the "Alma," and that the seat was again 13. More than that, in No. 17 was Hugh Payson, busily engaged in reading a magazine.

Hamilton had not come to the station with her. She thought regretfully that had he done so she might have had company to the city.

Soon she, too, was absorbed in a magazine, and even when the same conductor took up her ticket she did not notice him.

She did notice, however, a moment later, that Payson was having trouble. He had got on apparently a station above and had not a ticket. His smallest bill was a $100 note, and the conductor, mindful of that knockdown blow, would not change the bill, citing the company's rules as his justification.

"That bill may be all right," he declared, savagely, "but it don't look right to me. I don't have to take it, and I won't."

As the train whistled for the next station the conductor came into the car supported by the porter, the brakeman and the Pullman conductor.

"Got that change?" he demanded gleefully. Payson shook his head. The conductor nodded to his little army, and they moved forward. Before they reached him, Nellie sprang from her seat and went swiftly forward.

"Mr. Payson," she said, blushing redly, "you helped me out on the way up. May I help you out now?"

He gravely accepted the proffered purse. When the conductor had been paid he brought it back to her.

"I am very much obliged to you," he said. "You have saved me from grave financial loss. Will you not give me your address that I may return the loan?"

She handed him the tiny square of pasteboard. He drew from his pocket a letter. "If you will read this," he said, "you will find that your father and myself are not strangers."

She ran rapidly through the letter, which clearly established the fact that Payson and her father had been business partners in certain ventures, and for the rest of the trip she was rather glad that Hamilton had not come to the train. Freddy was such a tease.

Payson paid back the loan in person, yet her investment drew interest in the shape of candy and confectionery. Finally she decided to follow her father's example and take him into partnership.

Boston Ladies.

Gertrude—How do you know Mrs. Dowday makes her own clothes? Has she a sewing-woman's forefinger?

Millicent—I don't know anything about that. I was thinking of the horrid way her gowns fit her.

A Favorite of Fortune;

Or, In the Land of the Great White Tzar.

BY ST. GEORGE RATHBORNE.

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CHAPTER XXV.

A CHASE AND AN EXPLOSION.

This new phase of the situation developed additional interest on the part of our Wall street friend, and he began to figure in his mind just what sort of chances they might have in case of a stern chase.

The steamer was an old vessel that had done duty along the Caspian for many a year; but her capacity for speed was a sealed book to those who saw her for the first time. To tell the truth, if looks went for aught they could not place much dependence upon her ability to show a clean pair of heels, for she certainly appeared to be an "antique."

And yet, being something of a yachtsman in his way, Jerome thought he had discovered something in her lines to indicate that, when in her prime, she might have been deemed a record breaker. The Mary Powell of Hudson River fame had a birth record that was lost in hazy antiquity, yet he had seen her do a mile in wonderfully speedy time.

"I believe you're right, uncle—they do appear to be interested, and head straight for us. I must interview the Captain right away. Perhaps a squad of soldiers may be aboard, with orders to bring us back, dead or alive, and we're hardly prepared for a naval engagement," was the way Maurice put it.

He hurried off to find the college chum who ran things on board this Caspian Sea steamer just about as he had been wont to do at old Princeton, with a high hand.

Barrows had been given a few minutes of time, and was even ready to emerge from his stateroom, clad in the panoply of authority, as demonstrated by a gorgeous uniform, forced upon its unwilling officers by the company owning the line of steamers.

When he heard the news he ran in and snatched up a pair of binoculars, which he immediately fastened upon the craft that came puffing along in their wake.

Jerome waited for his report calmly, although he could guess readily enough what it might prove to be.

"I can see soldiers—quite a bunch of 'em, which proves your idea correct, old boy. And they appear to be hustling lively enough, throwing wood into the furnace. I know that boat, and more than once her Captain has dared me to a race, for you see this bum old craft once had the reputation of beating anything that cruised in these waters, though that was in the time of Adam, I rather surmise. However, we can do a little of that firing-up ourselves, and force the pace," was the way Barrows put it.

"They're gaining now," commented Uncle Anthony; "by the way, have you such a thing as a cannon aboard, Captain?"

The other looked keenly at him.

"Sorry to say I haven't, sir. Maurice forgot to introduce us, but unless I'm much mistaken you must be that uncle of his he used to call Fighting Mad Anthony—heard about your exploits in the war. Regret that my employers neglected to fit me out so as to repel boarders, so I presume we'll have to depend pretty much on our heels. If you'll excuse me now, gentlemen, I'll interview the engineer, and see what can be done to rush matters."

He could be heard presently below, thundering orders at those who served as stokers, and immediately the blackest of smoke began to pour forth from the funnel of the steamer, showing that a new kind of fuel was being used to generate additional quantities of indispensable steam.

Uncle rubbed his hands together cheerfully, after the manner of a man who does not find matters quite so dull after all.

And he smiled, too, while observing some slight increase in their motion.

"He's doing it, you just wager my son. We shall have soon have the bulge on those pirates yonder. Already I fancy I can hear 'em swearing their favorite Russian oaths, and tearing things loose to work up more power. It's immense, according to my way of thinking, and a fitting end to our dramatic journey."

"I've read of these things in connection with life on the Mississippi, how rival boats were wont to race, and a nigger would be fastened on the safety valve to hold it down; but really I never expected to take part in such an exciting affair," remarked Jerome, who was also more or less tickled by the possibilities of the situation, though when he glanced toward Lady Fedora and realized what it meant to her he felt that he would willingly forego the pleasure of the hazard for a surety.

They were heading straight out into the open sea, and by degrees the docks of the great oil port began to grow less distinct as mile after mile was passed over at this swift pace.

Noticing the fearful black volume that rolled forth from the stack, Jerome wondered what Barrows was shoving into the furnace, whether oil, after the manner of those old-time racers of the Mississippi, tar-barrels; but no matter what the material, the result was convincing enough.

The old steamer fairly shook as with the ague.

Her nose cut through the water like a knife, hurling it to the right and left with disdain; while looking back one could see a foamy wake that extended almost to the prow of the pursuing tug.

All voices had ceased now save the sharp, incisive tones of the Captain, as he ordered more fuel to be piled on. Those of the crew gaped at the craft booming along in their rear, and, noting the soldiers aboard, drew their own conclusions as to what it meant. They were a pretty badly rattled crowd, taken all in all, doubtless believing that an explosion would wind up the career of the old steamer after all.

Jerome saw all these things, and would, if he lived through the experience, smile many a time at the memory of the same.

Just then it was serious enough.

He walked over to where Fedora stood, white of face, yet showing more or less eagerness in the race, for she had understood all along how it meant the culminating stroke in her fortunes, and that if they managed to leave that persistent tug in the lurch all would be well.

In order to buoy up her courage, Maurice assumed a confidence he was not actually feeling, and made light of the matter, joking about the inability of the pursuing tug to overcome the lead of their craft, and predicting all manner of dismal things for the smaller vessel when the wind, which was fast rising, became violent.

"Oh, I hope they will not be drowned on my account!" she exclaimed, and he thought the more of her because she could feel pity for those who hounded her. That was like a woman, he considered, for one of the sterner sex would exercise mighty little care whether the blessed tug went down with all on board, or put back for the shelter of the harbor.

Barrows was not satisfied with holding his own. Perhaps the banter of the tug people had rankled in his sensitive soul this long time, and now that an opportunity had arisen whereby the respective merits of the rival craft might be tested, he was bound to thresh the thing out to a conclusion.

Even stolid old Uncle Anthony began to get nervous when he felt the vibration of the deck, and heard the thunder of wildly pounding machinery below.

Jerome saw him pucker up his lips as if about to whistle, while his eyebrows were elevated in a significant manner, as though he might be speculating just where he would drop should the boilers give way.

This had been the tragic wind-up of more than one race in those good old days along the Father of Waters, and history was fond of repeating itself.

Well, they were gaining a little, at any rate, unless his eyes deceived him, for the tug was certainly further away than when the real race began. Why would not Barrows feel satisfied with the glory already won, and desist from crowding matters? Good enough would satisfy Jerome, without assuming further risks; but the Captain must have gone clean daft, and only considered holding those tug fellows up to ridicule.

Suddenly there was heard a hissing sound, followed almost immediately by an explosion of some sort.

Jerome held his breath, and fully expected to feel the deck rise under him, while Fedora uttered a scream, clutching his arm appealingly, and Uncle nodded that wise old head of his as if to say, "I told you so."

Their pace had slackened considerably, but not in a manner to indicate that the

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whole machinery of the vessel had been put out of the game.

Now the tug began to gain perceptibly, and a different view was taken of the case by those on board, for they could be heard cheering madly.

Uncle darted below to find out what had happened, and to offer his assistance, if it was needed.

He soon came back, grinning as if it were a joke.

"One boiler pretty much out of service—sprung a leak, I guess. Lucky it wasn't worse. Captain crowding the other for all she's worth. Say, it's a great sight down there, and really worth the risk to look at. Run down, Maurice, and you'll never forget it. Captain working like a fiend, black and sweaty, and has every man-jack of 'em scared half to death, so that they jump about like monkeys when he howls an order. It's just sublimely ridiculous."

"But serious all the same, for you can see how they gain—only a question of time until they overtake us," said Jerome, pointing to the pursuing tug.

"Captain says don't worry. He can keep ahead until it gets too rough for that little fellow. Wind's increasing fast, you notice, friends, and the sea is rising with it. Notice how the tug wallows now and then—she won't gain much longer, bet your life!"

This was glorious news, and gave Jerome another lease of life, for, his attention having been called to the facts, he realized their truth. The small craft was laboring heavily in the rising billows, and must soon lose her advantage through lack of hulk—indeed, be compelled to turn tail and steam for a harbor under penalty of being swamped in the coming storm.

Accordingly, finding his mind somewhat relieved by this fact, Jerome did drop below to gaze upon the spectacle as described so gleefully by the General.

It did remind him somewhat of Dante's Inferno, with the glowing fires, and the blackened fiends that kept tossing all manner of inflammable things into their insatiable jaws, while the voice of Barrows sang out orders. Maurice was forcibly reminded of those days when this same Barrows was captain of the gridiron team at college, and led his boys to victory with the same enthusiasm he now displayed in urging his fellows to fire up.

If that other boiler only held out they would win despite their crippled condition, and every soul on board was praying after a fashion that the rivets might not give way under the awful pressure.

When Maurice clambered on deck again he found Uncle Anthony dancing a regular hornpipe, waving his hat and singing glory hallelujahs; nor was the reason for his singular actions hard to understand, for a glance astern revealed the tug turning tail, having given up the hopeless chase.

CHAPTER XXVI

THROUGH TEMPEST INTO A SNUG HARBOR.

It seemed to be the fate of our friends to jump from the frying-pan into the fire—that hardly had one danger been successfully battled against than another immediately cropped up, threatening them with destruction.

The satisfaction which they naturally experienced when the pursuing tug turned toward the shore was soon dissipated by the new conditions which arose with the coming storm; for with but one half the usual energy on tap the old ramshackle steamer was in a wretched state to meet the fury of the elements.

And Jerome had heard that this same Caspian sea could get up quite a respectarow when it chose.

Barrows no longer drove his stokers furiously, since the news had been communicated to him with respect to the change of base on the part of the tug; but he needed power with which to meet the onset of the gathering gale, and that poor boiler must do the work of two.

They could no longer see land, and so far as shelter was concerned might just as well be on the ocean, for Barrows knew of no harbor into which he could run in time. On the whole their chances would be better in the open, since the coast presented many rocky points upon which it might be sure death for all on board to have the vessel driven.

Jerome had not experienced many storms at sea, and found himself gazing in admiration not unmixed with awe as the waves grew more mighty, and the vessel rolled about very like cork, her paddle-wheels churning froth, now buried deep beneath the surface and anon whirling loosely in space.

Sometimes it almost seemed as though she meant to take a header straight down into the depths, only by good luck recovering in time to meet the succeeding billow. Now they rode the top waves like victors in an engagement, and anon were rolling down into what seemed a valley of despair.

When the rain began to pelt down, accompanied with thunderclaps that were absolutely appalling, Jerome drew Lady Fedora into shelter, where she could still look upon the dread spectacle without being exposed to the fury of the blast.

There was indeed a fascination about it that affected him, also. Many times he experienced that sudden tremor not to be controlled, when a shudder ran through the rickety steamer, and it seemed as though her groaning and heaving must result in a terrible disaster.

What man could live long in that yeast of tumbling waters! Jerome had always accounted himself a fine swimmer, but he realized that his accomplishment would avail but little if suddenly cast into that furious sea.

Although it was his desire to avoid alarming the little lady, for she had a white enough face already, and turned a pitiful look on him each time the crazy old hulk plunged headlong down into a watery valley, still Maurice understood that it would be criminal to neglect any chance that offered whereby he might be enabled to save her, should the worst come upon them.

Accordingly he spoke to good Uncle Anthony, who hustled off, returning in an incredibly short time with his arms full of cork and canvas life-preservers, the location of which he had noted some time before.

Before he would pay any attention to himself Jerome insisted upon attaching several of the floats to Fedora, trying to make light of the affair; but she understood that this was only done through a desire to cheer her spirits up, and that the situation must be looked upon as desperate indeed.

Really it was strange how Fate seemed determined that he should win this sweet girl only through a succession of perils. She had learned to lean upon him so confidingly that the question he had upon the tip of his tongue many times need hardly be given utterance, for love and reliance shone in the very glow of her eyes. Nor did he hesitate to put his arm about her when some unusual vicious dip on the part of the steamer caused her to cry out in terror.

It was hoped that the storm would be of shore duration, after the manner of the usual thundercloud arrangement met with during the summer season on the Caspian; but as the minutes were prolonged into an hour, and there did not appear to be the least cessation of the howling gale, even Barrows was forced to admit that it looked bad enough.

He was a sight for the gods, with his sooty face and begrimed clothes; but the indomitable spirit of the man shone out through all these disguises, and Jerome had confidence to believe that if human skill and energy could avail aught, they would pull through, for the Captain was here, there, and everywhere, it seemed, giving orders, repairing damages, and forcing the men at the fire-pits to do their best, though they showed more or less inclination to abandon their posts and seek the deck, fearful lest they be caught below when the steamer took her last plunge, and strangled like rats.

No one had the least idea as to whither they had been carried by the fury of the gale. Perhaps far out into the middle of the angry sea, and again, it was even possible they would hear the roar of breakers on the cruel reefs along the shore at any time.

Uncle Anthony, glancing toward the young people and finding that Maurice had taken his sweetheart in his arms and was engaged in telling her something that must have given them both considerable pleasure, mused upon the vicissitudes of life, and the charm of an affection that could lighten even the terrors of possible shipwreck.

"God bless them and bring them through safe and sound. I want to see her landed in the family, all right; but it looks pretty dubious, I'm thinking," he kept saying to himself, casting an anxious eye to windward, where the fiends of the element seemed to be gathering fresh force with which to complete their work of sinking the brave old vessel, victor in many a past contest with these enemies.

There is no need of prolonging the agony.

For three hours they were the sport of the wind and waves, and during that time it seemed more than a dozen occasions arose when all of them thought the crisis was upon them; yet by an almost superhuman effort Barrows would succeed in baffling the forces leagued against him, so that they swept on in spite of accumulating terrors.

It was the climax to all that had happened since Jerome scaled the walls of the chateau and presented himself before the woman of his heart, a specter from the outside world.

The end did come, just when they had begun to have lively hopes that they might outride the now lulling gale. A billow that far exceeded any of its predecessors dashed down upon the devoted craft, raised the steamer high in the air, and smashed her frame down upon a rock that chanced to be in the exact spot where destiny had brought them.

Here the shattered vessel clung, while waves broke over her, and every minute they expected to be their last.

At least the storm was over, the wind changed its sweep to another quarter, and by degrees the waves went down.

Evening saw them still hanging there upon the rocky reef, with a fair prospect that they would hold out through the night.

Barrows did not mean to take any chances.

The sea had gone down enough to allow the launching of a boat, so that he started to landing his crew.

When every man had been taken ashore save his passengers, he announced his plan to them—a roomy and safe boat, plenty of provisions, no prospect of rough weather for a day or two—what better could they ask than transportation to their former destination, the Persian port?

Even Lady Fedora eagerly assented, and accordingly what little luggage the party wished to carry was lowered into the boat by Dimitri, and just as the shades of night closed around them they quitted the hulk and pulled away.

That was Russian land close by, and none of them cared to set foot upon any territory under the dominion of the mighty Tzar.

The breeze being favorable they hoisted a sail, and through the livelong night continued to cover many miles, heading in a general southerly direction.

All the next day they continued to sail over the blue sea, their course set toward that destination for which the ill-fated steamer had been bound.

Then Chance, as though weary of playing pranks with the fortunes of our friends, sent a steamer to their rescue, which was also bound for Resht, and gladly were they received aboard.

The commander was a Russian, but he knew not what they had done, and of course no one took the trouble to inform him as to their being fugitives; so they finished their voyage so marked with tumult and danger, in peace that was doubly welcome.

Everything was lovely now, and Jerome felt that he had really earned his welcome reward. Still, it is not every man who receives his just dues.

By stages the party journeyed through Persia, and in Teheran it was thought advisable to have a little ceremony performed through the good offices of the American Minister residing there, so that Jerome's laudable ambition became a fact, and Lady Fedora assumed the duties of plain Mrs. Jerome.

Some months later the party landed in New York, and from that time on the young people were immersed in wonderful plans for building a home in some suburban Eden where Maurice owned a beautiful stretch of country.

Money will accomplish wonders, and by its use the very horses that had played such a leading part in their wild flight from the mountain fortress of Major Boris were brought over to the care of the worshiping Dimitri, who actually cried like a baby when he first saw them, being a trifle homesick, poor chap.

Maurice had the nerve to send cards to the Governor of Trans-Caucasia, and received congratulations from that singular party, who, it appeared, could admire boldness and diplomacy even though exercised at his own expense.

Perhaps he still runs things over there in that strange country. Jerome and Uncle Anthony often wonder whether he has succeeded in putting an end to those dashing raids of the border wolf, Bazatkhan.

Maurice, in his moments of idleness, while he enjoys his cigar in the bosom of his family, can shut his eyes and see again the wonderful panorama through which he passed in the land of the Great White Tzar—see the remarkable Grattscheff, stiff as a ramrod, marching like a machine to order, see the keen-eyed Governor, Major Boris, baffled at last by the wit of a Yankee; see the dashing Bazatkhan, bold raider of the steppes—all rise and stalk before him in grim procession, ending with the chase on the Caspian and the wreck of the steamer; after which he awakens to find the lovely lady of the castle bending over him, her starry eyes beaming with Love, and Maurice heaves a sigh of satisfaction to realize that the strenuous life is in the past, his ship safe in the harbor of Matrimony, with the Pilot aboard.

The End.

An Oklahoma Mystery.

(Continued from page seven.)

would discover you. I heard a twig crack once, and my heart jumped clear up into my throat. But we will talk this over after a while. Will you look at Robin munching that orange! Dear me, Stanley, but you are wise for one of your years and experience! How did you know enough to use a handkerchief for a bib? Robin isn't doing a thing to it. You would make an excellent nurse, Stanley."

"Or father," he suggested.

This caused Doll to color furiously as she gave a little embarrassed laugh.

"You torment, Stanley! But come, let's run in and eat our dinner; then we will walk down to the log. It is pleasant down there."

"Thank you, Doll, but I have already dined."

"Pshaw! I seem destined to eat alone this evening, but you'd better come in and try a piece of pie, anyhow."

Later on, when Doll sat with Stanley under the trees, discussing her experience of the afternoon, she little suspected that they had a listener but a few feet away. As Maude Hill learned how she had been tricked, it was all that she could do to keep from rushing from her hiding place and throttle her enemy. She controlled herself, however, and planned revenge.

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Charley—And why is it so wonderful?

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Bruce Hart's Gold-Seeking.

BY B. SEAVEY SAUNIER.

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CHAPTER IX.—(Continued.)

A week passed slowly by. Daily some one made a trip to the canyon to report on the condition of the ice-pack. The boys [illegible] discouraged with the waiting. The [illegible] drew nearer and grew fiercer. Mr. Woods found a razor among Steve's effects and amused himself by shaving his face. He still wore his hat teetered over his eyes. His sole diversion was a solitary walk along the ridge, the end of which was occupied by the camp. This he took often, so often that the boys grew accustomed to seeing his form standing out acutely in the thin, bright air. Pete and Sam prospected for gold. Bruce and Steve made a jest of their efforts and lay outstretched for hours on the warm moss beneath the spruces, talking idly or sleeping.

"If we live till we die, which I doubt if we do," began Steve.

"Oh, come, that's stale," retorted Steve.

"As the Irishman said," continued Bruce stubbornly, "there'll come a steamer along here and rescue us shipwrecked gold-seekers."

"In another week," added Steve, sarcastically.

"I was going to say it all if you had given me time," resumed Bruce.

"The fire'll be out by that time," was the dubious forecast.

"No it won't."

"Where'll we get anything to burn?"

"We'll bring it from the canyon, of course."

"What! lug firewood all that way?"

"Yes, or lug the camp to where the firewood is."

"Either way is equally bad."

"Say, Woodsey looks like you, Steve, now his beard is shaved off."

"Yes, he does! Am I white on my jaw and brown on my face?"

"No, but he's like you, some way, I don't know how."

"Shucks; he's more like you, I think. I've often thought so."

"Well, he may look more like me than like Pete or Sam," was Bruce's final reply, which ended with a good-tempered laugh.

"Look at him now. You'd think he had news to tell when he comes toward us, but he always turns t'other way again."

"I wish he had. I'm stagnating for something to happen. Sam ought to scare up another bear—it's high time—think of a whole weak and no bear! Why, it's outrageous!"

"He'll startle us with some sort of trick, no doubt, before we get off this hump of land. He's got the absurdest luck of any scamp I ever knew. He slides into everything he wants as slick as oil. It would be just like his impertinence to find gold up here where no one else could even get the least whiff of it."

"Yes; or where there's no probability of it."

"He's coming now, but I guess it's no gold mine or he'd make a bigger flourish. He's got something, though, as sure as numbers."

The two boys sat up, already interested and suspicious of boding circumstances regarding Sam's good fortune.

A large piece of crude ore, lusterless and quite lacking in the requirements of the precious metal which has made the Yukon famous, was in his hand.

"What's that, Sam?" Bruce called out.

"I dunno. 'Tain't vegetable and 'tain't an'mal. I reckon it must be petrified assimitation of minerals."

"It's what?" shouted Bruce in amazement.

"He said petrified assimitation of minerals," Steve said meaningly, and took the curious thing in his hand while Bruce fell over in silent laughter. Sam waited to have his conundrum analyzed.

"It isn't iron pyrites," the boys agreed, "for it has too dull a color."

"It was heavy and its weight and clinging touch impressed the boys with the thought that some metal of value had been discovered.

"Let's ask Woodsey—perhaps he knows all about it," Bruce suggested.

But Mr. Woods, when appealed to, could not readily determine the real nature of the metal.

"It ain't gold, I know that," he affirmed positively. "Let's see—let's see—tin, lead, iron—it ain't any of them. But I'll bet a tin horn and a lead whistle that it's copper."

At this every one studied the ore with keen interest. Unskilled though they were in the study of minerals, each was now sensible that the truth must have been hit upon. Bruce and Steve gazed at each other tragically.

"I told you so," Steve declared.

"The black old heathen!" Bruce cried.

"What did I tell you," repeated Steve, "anyhow? He's as slick as oil. Come on, Sam, and show us where you got it," and Steve started back on Sam's late footsteps.

At first the negro was reluctant to follow. Then an inspiration seeming to touch him, he led the party to the extreme edge of the north side of the ridge, where the river swept in curling waves around the promontory. Down on his knees the darkey went and fitted the lump of metal into a crevice between two bulging rocks that studded the rise of ground.

"Deah's whar I dun got dat fossillated coppah, an' dat's a fac'. Dat's what Sam tellin' yo' all whar he dun foun' it."

He stood back and the others looked silently at the spot, then at Sam, then at each other. They studied the place a moment, noting carefully the earth formation, and turned away, leaving Sam alone with his rocks and their strange production.

"I guess that much copper won't do him any harm, nor us, either," Mr. Woods said, sagely.

"No, he'll never kill himself eating peacocks' tongues with the money he gets out of it," returned Steve.

"W[illegible]," put in Bruce irritably, "if he didn't find it there, where in time did he get it? That's what I want to know."

Mr. Woods laughed.

"Why," he said, "if you were so anxious to save his precious life a while ago, enough so to risk your own a-doin' it, why can't you be willin' to let him have something to keep it a-goin' with? Hey? You act as if his life was worth saving, but you don't want him to find anything in it worth having. I tell ye, boy, he was just the same color t'other day as he is now, and his value [illegible] less. Now just you let him keep his secret if he wants to."

Bruce put his back against one of the trees and fell silent as if this philosophy of Mr. Woods had quite staggered him. He felt quieted and comforted, after a moment, and put Sam and his enviable luck quite out of his mind.

That night when the camp was silent and the Northern lights were dancing their eerie fantasy overhead, Sam crept away from the sleeping camp. Bruce alone noticed his stealthy departure. Instead of rousing Steve or Pete as would have been natural, he went over to Mr. Woods and touched his elbow.

"What's up, boy?" Mr. Woods whispered quickly.

"Sam's going to stake his claim, I guess," Bruce said, tentatively.

Mr. Woods was silent a moment. Then he arose and drew Bruce out under the flashing ribbons.

"Let him stake it," he said. "You don't want to follow him, do you, and play the sneak? Not if you are the son of your mother that I know you to be."

Bruce looked at the man in surprise.

"Do you know my mother?"

"Lad, I knew your mother before you were born."

Then there was a silence. Bruce felt that a romance was working out under the man's slouch hat, and waited, his interest in Sam's copper claim forgotten in this new development. Finally he gave speech to a sudden longing that sprang up with the thought of his mother awaiting his return, desolated alike of husband and children.

"I want to go back to her," he said.

"So do I, Bruce," returned Mr. Woods, "but I'm plumb crazy to know how to do it."

"What?" cried the boy, growing more and more amazed at the man's words.

Mr. Woods took off his hat.

"Look at me, boy, good and hard. I've changed in eight years, I know, and you've never 'lotted on my being in the flesh. Well, that's natural. I ain't wondering over that any. I wouldn't wonder, either, if you should be sorry to stake a claim on a poor stick of humanity like me. You are my own son."

"Your—son?"

"Just so—my proper name's Hart—the one that you and Robert and Susie and your mother have helped to carry these twenty-eight years. I schemed to come back to you all and bring a fortune. When I couldn't do that, I kept waiting for something to turn up, and as a last recourse I came to the Klondike. I've found you here, but as yet I have found no gold. I've had a

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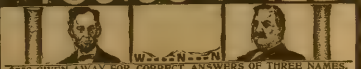

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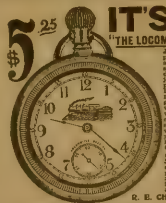

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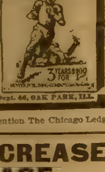

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How to Examine Your Heart.

Almost one-half the people have heart disease. The trouble is they don't know it. They are careless—they over-exert—run up stairs or to catch a train, and then comes the terrible shock—sudden death. It is no exaggeration to say that thousands of deaths might have been avoided had the victims known about my Heart Tablets. Pain is not the only symptom. If you have any of the following, you have heart trouble. You are just as liable to drop down dead as the people you read about every day in the papers. The thing that will prevent it and cure you is my Heart Tablets. They have prevented hundreds of deaths. They will cure any man or woman who has any of these symptoms and save them from a horrible fate. If you have been treating yourself for stomach, lung, kidney or nervous disease, and have failed to find a cure, the chances are 10 to 1 that your TROUBLE IS IN YOUR HEART. Hundreds of such cases are found every year.

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Fluttering, Palpitation, Shortness of Breath, Tenderness, Numbness or Pain in the Left Side, Arm or under the Shoulder Blade, Fainting Spells, Dizziness, Hungry or Weak Spells, Spots Before the Eyes, Sudden Starting in Sleep, Dreaming, Nightmare, Choking Sensation in Throat, Oppressed Feeling in Chest, Cold Hands and Feet, Painful to Lay on Left Side, Dropsy, Swelling of the Feet or Ankles (one of the surest signs), Neuralgia around the Heart. If you have even one of these symptoms you should not delay treatment a single day.

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[illegible] WRIGHT, M. D., Buena Vista, Colo.

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sort of love feast over you ever since I found you, but I've had it all by myself. To me my own flesh and blood is better than all the gold that is here in the country or ever was here, boy. Can you realize that?"

The electric glow faded into a single faint color, then in the pause that followed the man's speech a few tender purples and reds crept tremulously down to the edge of the glowing disk as if pleading with the bitter doubt that enwraps human hearts. Bruce noted it half unconsciously. The long years of his mother's solitude and hopeful waiting flitted by, grouped with that foolish quest which had caused the sad cortege, and his own repressed desires; this filled his thoughts for a time. His father made no sign. He was as if awaiting a verdict on his conduct.

In that brief interval Sam crept up to the tent and dropped with a groan at the doorway. The light above had begun its wierd, faint crackling, and the colors played in and out hurriedly.

"Oh laws! I jest cain't stan' dat racket dem ghosts a-makin'. I ain't no sinner—I'se hones' niggah, I is, an' dat's a fac'. I wa'n't doin' nothin' but lookin' at dat ribbah, seein' when it gwine run out. It's gwine run out by de mawnin', an' dat's suah. Dis niggah am a-tellin' you all nothin' but de truth. I reckon dem angels slappin' dere wings 'bout dat ribbah gwine run out. Dey ain't no lie 'bout Sam. M—m—m!"

It was maudlin talk followed by a half-muttered groan, but the two whose thoughts had been interrupted by it heard every word distinctly. Bruce put both hands on his companion's shoulders.

"Father, come; let's see if the river is really running out. If it is we can get home to the folks quicker than we expected. It all depends upon that old river, father, you know—everything depends on that, for, you see, the gold mine will be discovered as soon as the water runs through the canyon again."

CHAPTER X.

Bruce kept one hand on his father's shoulder and the friendship between them was sealed. They understood something of each other. They would work together to repair the neglect and waste that the past years bespoke. Together they looked out upon the river, teeming with reflected jets of color, and surging dark and ominous in the shadows.

"We are fully three feet from the water mark," Bruce cried excitedly. "Hurrah! The ice pack's broken! Do you hear? Do you see? That means that we can go back to the mine and get out the gold that's in it."

The boy capered about in his delight, then put his arm again about his father's shoulders.

"Never mind about what you said; it's all gone by and can't be helped. I expect you've had it worse than mother has. We heard you were dead, but mother never could give you up. She's waiting for you now. She's been busy, too. She's nursed sick folks and sewed for well folks, and we've all of us helped her. We got along all right in a money way, but we wanted you there to fill up the gap you left when you went to New Mexico. It's never been filled up, you know, by any of us."

The father was silent a moment, considering the son's words and all that they meant to himself.

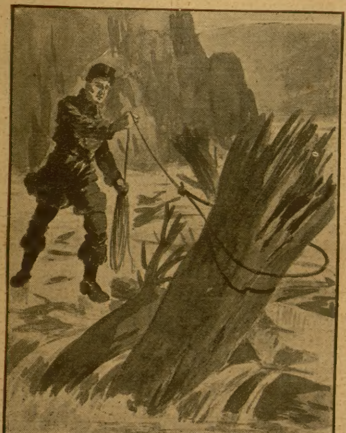
"Let's go in and get some sleep if we can," he said at last. "It'll be sun-up before a great while, and then no chance of sleep."

They found Sam still lying where he had fallen in his fear of the "ghost racket," and they noted by his regular breathing that he had dropped asleep.

When the day came its warm brilliance dwelt upon the little camp with new inspiration. Every one was elated. The river was lowering rapidly, as was evident from the bared slopes of the promontory on which stood the camp, and also from the odd, sucking motion as the water surged forward in its course.

As soon as breakfast was disposed of, the camp was deserted. Every one marched off to the canyon to see what had taken place thereat. Before they had reached the spot, however, they had an inkling of what had been done. They heard the roar of falling water and its hollow echo against the cavernous walls through which it must rush. Arriving at the spot they found that the huge ice blocks had almost disappeared. The logs alone held back the volume of water which escaped, some seething through and some leaping over the distorted mass of sodden driftwood, that had come from no one could tell whither.

In all the streams and lakes of this vast north country is to be found a curiously large amount of drifting wood—trees, roots and branches—a fact that has struck the Klondike visitor as one of the odd features of the country. Where this large amount of drifting matter hails from in a land wholly lacking the usual logging camps or pioneer clearings, is a question yet unanswered. This that barred the canyon's mouth was clogged with refuse moss and long grass and in the midst of the logs, branches and moss were still lodged small blocks and bits of ice.



He flung the noose around the head of the log.

Bruce, anxious to hasten the return to his cherished gold mine, studied the dam attentively.

"I can see where, if I had a mule and a strong rope, I could dislodge some of that stuff," he said presently.

"Why do you ask for a mule?" questioned Steve. "Here are five of us, strong and hearty. You don't need such an impossible thing as a mule. What you want is a strong rope."

"Well, that's true, Steve, as sure as you live. Five men ought to do some pretty tall pulling. But the rope we've got is too small. It might do to pull Pete, there, out of the water, but I doubt if it will do this business."

"Try it—you can't tell till you try it," advised the older man, whom the boys still facetiously called "Woodsey."

Toward evening the boys carried the rope down to the canyon. They had spent much time strengthening it with twistings of bear-skin strips, and they thought that they now had a fairly stout line with which to undo the big dam of drift.

It was Bruce who ventured upon the perilous task of attaching the rope to a projecting log. The log was jagged and splintered at the end as if it had been suddenly snapped from its parent trunk by a furious blast of wind.

Cautiously he climbed down upon the compactly driven mass of logs that now and again was sucked backward with the water, then released with a sudden force and jar that made the ground vibrate. Treading such a roadway with the water slipping over it and at times dashing menacingly over him Bruce found was more perilous than he had imagined. He was obliged to keep his wits keenly alert in order to avoid being tricked with a sudden

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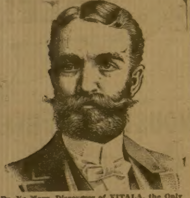

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lurch of the dam, and to watch for a heavy dash of water that should tend to unfoot him. The man on the bank above him watched, holding the rope. His father looked on with stern anxiety, half blaming himself for allowing the hazardous exploit. Yet he believed in the lad's daring and good judgment. Slowly Bruce crept out, step by step, urging his feet along inch by inch, his body flinching with the cold dash of the water, but his hands closely holding the loop at the end of the rope. Another moment and he flung the noose around the head of the log. It fell, fortunately, free of the splinters and slipped down a pace toward the lad, who now began his trip back over the way he had come, pulling the rope taut and steadying himself thereby as he progressed.

The men quickly tightened the entire line and Bruce found his home trip safer. Once his feet slipped and he hung for an instant on the rope, but he regained his place again with a cheer from Steve by way of encouragement. Another moment and he was scrambling up the steep embankment.

"Hurrah for you, Bruce!' was the shout that greeted him.

"Now, heave ho!" called Mr. Woodsey, and together they strained at the task. Slowly the log below arose. The rope cut like wire in the hands of the men, but it held, and the log was drawn steadily forward until it rested free upon the top of the dam. It seemed to have been the key to the big lock-up. Instantly smaller logs began to move with the fresh current now let loose. The refuse matter trailed out and slipped into the runway, and the business was quite done. The big dam was broken. Already the mad rush for the canyon had begun. One by one log and branch was seized by the swift flood and swept away. Sometimes there would be a momentary clogging across the great entrance, but the undercurrent, like a huge invisible hand, seized the fractious connivers and dragged them down.

"Well, I guess that's all right, boys," Woodsey remarked. "I guess we can move camp before a great while. We want to cut that log loose that's got out rope hitched to it, and then we can go home to supper."

Three days later the gully lay with its bed bared to the hot sunshine, the last remnant of the big volume of water vaporing upward, and the camp was no more on the promontory. Sam was there by his own choice. The others had joyously departed for their former quarters. They found the stakes of the claim still in place, though standing prominently out of the ground, the water having washed much of the earth from about them. Woodsey staked his claim where he had intended building the bonfire on the day of Pete's arrival with the news of the ice-pack. He went about his preparations with less of nervous zeal than formerly. Instead, there had grown an earnest purpose within him—a purpose to get what he could out of the country as quickly as possible, and then hurry homeward. Bruce, too, shared the feeling, though in a boyish sort of way. He wanted to find gold, it is true, but more than that he eagerly looked forward to presenting his father to the folks at home.

Steve and Pete worked with a lesser purpose. They had but the unworthy incentive—the gratification of their own pleasure—to occupy their thoughts. The mine developed under their hands with satisfying results. Everybody was pleased with the gold output.

"As soon as the next steamer comes," Bruce said several days after they had become quite settled on their claim, "we'll get the Indian carriers to tote our luggage down from the shack beyond the settlement. Then Steve can live on our store of victuals for a while. We've boarded with him too long altogether."

"Oh, bother!" returned Steve. "I guess I've got my pay, all right. Why, when you ran up the hill with that snorting hot stove and fell down under a shower of hot tin cans"—here Steve laughed at the remembrance—"why, that was worth a hundred dollars. 'Twas better than a circus."

"Then," he resumed after the general laugh had subsided, "there was that bear hunt—worth another hundred—and Sam. By the way, what's become of that scamp?"

"Darn 'im, I don't know. He's up to some roguery, no doubt. He'll work our ruin yet, even though I did save him from drowning. His conscience is as blunt as—as—well, I guess he hasn't any conscience at all," Bruce finished confidently.

"Here comes somebody from the settlement. We won't be able to keep the secret of this mine any longer, I guess," returned Steve, nodding toward the tall, vigorous walker that was descending the slope leading from the bank of the canyon.

Pete stopped wielding his pick and examined the visitor.

"That's Ike Carman," he said quickly.

"Is it?" asked Bruce. "Then stand by and face the band. Father, you watch him, will you, and see whatever he says. I don't know whether he's honest or tricky. I guess he's tricky. Let's pretend not to be much interested in this layout of ours, just to keep the breeze from blowing too stiff. If we don't we'll have the whole settlement on top of us by morning."

Thus advised, the miners either stopped work or changed it. Steve sat down by the tent door and deliberately chewed a stick. Woodsey went over to the river and gazed at the waterscape. Pete prepared wood for the stove nd Bruce emerged from the tent with an old newspaper in his hand and began reading aloud. The date of the paper was a year old. In view of this fact Steve grinned broadly as he chewed his stick and watched the visitor's advance.

"Howdy," said Ike with a sweep of his hat and a comprehensive look that included everything and everybody in view.

"Hello, Mr. Carman, are you lost?" responded Bruce.

"No, not that, though I didn't have no lantern to come down here with. I was calculatin' on visitin' the new mine, so I mosied down this 'ere way. Looks a little like business about here, I swan if it don't, but you ain't hustlin' any, I see. I s'pose there ain't much doin' away down here. I came over to congratulate you kids about gittin' shet o' that river as much as anything, b'gosh!"

He spat vigorously and sat down.

"I expect Sam was good enough to tell you all about it, wasn't he?" Bruce ventured.

"Oh, well, I expect so." Again he spat on the ground and studied the excavations and the crude appliances for gold mining. "Then, there was another good reason I had for comin' on this little stroll, which ain't less'n a long five miles, b'George!' '

He leaned against the tent as if to get a little rest, and noted Woodsey's back with quizzical attention. When he had done so he continued:

"When that steamer landed down yonder she left me a business letter from a man I know in Seattle. Well, this 'ere syndicate is as rich as Creasy, b'George, and them fellers are fer buyin' up young gold mines as soon as they get sprouted out'n the dirt."

By this time Woodsey had become one of Ike's audience, sitting down near the cook stove, but apparently little interested in what was said. He had his hat tilted over his eyes after the fashion of other days. The visitor drew his pipe out of a pocket, filled and lighted it, spending much time in so doing. Then, when he had pulled at it a moment, he held it away, running his eyes carefully from one face to another, each of which tried in vain to hide the doubts that worked therein. The man drew himself erect and smoked in silent dignity until Bruce kicked a clod of dirt impatiently.

"Well, what if they do?" he asked.

Ike flung him a glance and fingered his pipe.

"They made me their advance agent," he said, simply.

"Oh, did they? Well, I'll tell you what I think of your syndicate, that that's just this: It's a blooming bubble, and that's what I think of it. I haven't any doubt that you're its advance agent, all right. I s'pose you want to buy our mine, don't you? How much will you give for it now, spot cash?" Bruce flung his words at the man and turned away, crushing the newspaper in his hands.

Ike looked after him between quivering lids.

"Come, now," he said, with a gesture, "you needn't be mad because I lassoed Pete and hauled him ashore instead of you. By ginger, 'twa'n't my doin's, 'twas Fate's. Fate knew well enough 't you could kick through that b'ilin' canyon all right, but Pete, he's a different proposition. He ain't no pedigree for luck like yours, has he?"

Bruce relented enough to smile faintly.

"I never saw anything of it in black and white," he returned, "but that don't have anything to do with your syndicate racket. Where's Sam now? He's got a chunk of copper that he's mighty precious over. Are you going to buy him up, too?"

"Well, I've been sort of—sort of overhaulin' the idee. I been to see his claim and I reckon I'll negotiate terms with him 'fore long."

"You will? Say, how much is his claim worth?"

"'Bout fifty dollars."

"So much as that? How much would you give for ours?" with withering scorn.

"How much will you take?"

"Ten thousand."

Bruce stuffed his hands in his pockets and walked away.

Ike smoked on with long, slow pulls at his pipe. He was deliberately ignoring Bruce's valuation of the mines as much as he could in the face of the facts. He turned to Woodsey presently.

"Well, old man, what have you got to say about it?"

"Nothing," was the laconic answer. "The kid's all right. What he says goes."

Ike turned slowly to Steve, then to Pete, then back again to Steve:

"You got a claim here too, sonny?"

"Yes; I'm in with Bruce. He's too cheap, I think. I wouldn't take any ten thousand, unless 'twas for my part alone. I think twenty thousand would be about a fair price."

The man sat smoking in silence so long that finally he closed his eyes in sleep and the campers began moving about at little duties such as came handy.

"Well, I guess I'll be a-goin' along," Ike said, starting up at last and knocking his pipe empty against the edge of the stove. I guess you an' me ain't got no call to do business today, but I'll report your find down to headquarters, and maybe they'll send the president up here to investigate."

He strode off toward the steamer landing.

"What's he going to do down there, I wonder?" Steve said.

"Oh, he's going to telephone to his syndicate," remarked Bruce, and the others laughed.

Ten days after this came the next steamer. The camp by now had assumed the proportions of a settlement, due to the quick rush for a new gold output which always follows its discovery. Sam had sold out his copper mine to Ike Carman for a hundred dollars. He was at the landing when the boys reached it.

"Well, Sam, are you going on this steamer?" Bruce asked heartily.

"Suah—you gwine arrest me dis 'ere time like you did t'other time?"

"No, Sam, I guess I'll let you go, considerin' that you brought back the bear meat. That's all squared up, Sam, and we'll let bygones be bygones."

"What'll you do with all your money, Sam?" asked Steve curiously.

"I'se gwine study for a minister, dat's what dis niggah gwine do. 'Tain't no kind o' use tryin' to be a common person, an' dat's a fac'. When youse all gwine back to de States?"

"Next steamer!" cried Bruce, and laughed long and loud as if the prospect were extremely ludicrous.

"You sold your claim too cheap, Sam. Ike cheated you like the dickens," Steve affirmed.

Sam filled up and grew pompous.

"Don't you go to bellevin' dat, now, honey, nevah. Dis niggah knows what he's 'bout."

The darkey came close and impressed the next words with a long, dark finger.

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"Now, dis is a fac'. Sam nevah had no claim on dat copah mine. He ain't nevah had no minin' docyments. Ike thought I had. He thought he was beatin' dis niggah and I thought I was a-beatin' him. See? I'se come out de best, man, and dis steamah's gwine take me home. I ain't nevah comin' back heah, nevah."

"He ought to become a missionary to the cannibals," remarked Bruce as Sam disappeared. "He'd get his just deserts for all his rascality, then."

"It's a good thing we bluffed Ike off the way we did," returned Steve. "I wouldn't wonder if there is something about a syndicate, but I guess he's no advance agent."

"No, not by a long twist. I'd sell out any day for five thousand."

"So would I."

"Done, then," said a voice close by, and a man who had just stepped off the steamer gangway faced the boys. Ike Carman was behind him. The boys were startled and stepped back in amazement.

Ike set his lips grimly.

"You see I ain't the liar you took me for," he said. "This is the manager of the syndicate I spoke to you about. I was to meet him today down here, and while you kids were joshing with Sam I told him all about you. He's ready to pay you the five thousand as soon as he has a look at your ore. He'll find it all right, I'll swan if he don't. Jest the same's that copper mine o' Sam's I bought to get shet of him."

When the news was told to Woodsey he merely said:

"Take it, boy; we'll have enough to stock Robert's farm and build a good house for us all, and outhouses. Take it, and let's be gone. We can get aboard the steamer by the time she sails, if we try."

"That's so—that's so. Hurarh for a home of our own in a civilized country, and good riddance to the Klondike! Hurrah for Ike Carman!" and he tossed up his hat. "Will you go with us, Steve?"

"No, I'll stay the summer out, I think," was the answer.

"I stay with Steve, I think, too," said Pete.

"Well, you are welcome to all my luggage and the pranks of the Yukon, to boot. Father and I are going to quit. We are bound for a good honest farm in the States, and that's better than Klondike luck, by a long shot."

The End.

Agate for June.

Sam—Dat Pete Green am de closest man Ah ebbeh met.

Remus—How so?

Sam—Why, he gib up a pretty gal dat was bohn in April fer a homely one dat was bohn in June.

Sam—Why was dat?

Remus—Kase de birthstone ob April is diamond en dat ob June is only agate.

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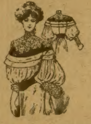
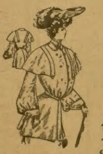
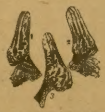


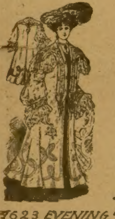
4641 FANCY WAIST 32-40 BUST



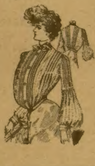
4640 BLOUSE COAT 32-40 BUST.



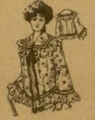
4621 COAT AND DRESS SLEEVES 32-36-40 BUST



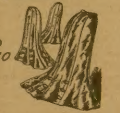
4623 EVENING COAT 32-40 BUST



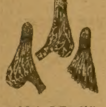
4626 TUCKED BLOUSE 32-40 BUST



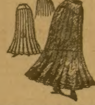
4637 HOUSE JACKET 32-44 BUST



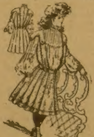
4615 SEVEN GORED FLARE SKIRT 22-34 WAIST



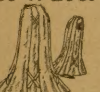
4614 DRESS SLEEVES 32-36-40 BUST



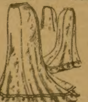
4608 MISSES KILT PLAITED SKIRT 12-16 YRS



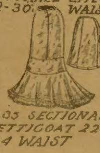
4625 GIRL'S SUSPENDER COSTUME 6-12 YRS



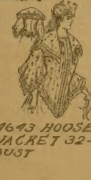
4644 NINE GORED WALKING SKIRT WITH PANEL EFFECT 22-30 WAIST



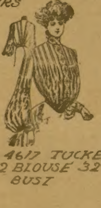
4624 FIVE GORED FLARE SKIRT 22-36 WAIST



4633 SECTIONAL PETTICOAT 22-34 WAIST



4643 HOUSE JACKET 32-42 BUST



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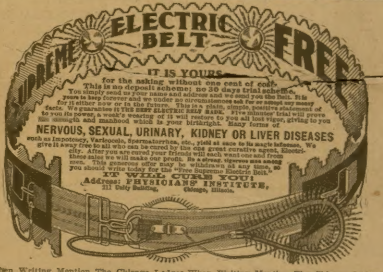

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PLAYING MAKE BELIEVE.

Polly and I played "make believe,"
  With the apple tree and the swing.
Polly, she was the gentle queen,
  And I was the golden king.

And Polly wore a blue silk gown
  With, oh, a very long trail,
And carried a fan of feathers
  Like a peacock's spread out tail.

We drove in a golden chariot—
  We had the swing for a throne—
And our "make believe" castle and ocean
  Were puddles and pieces of stone.

And after we'd "make believe" a minute,
  I seemed like a truly king,
Too proud to cry when I tumbled
  Down on the ground from the swing.

—Selected.

The Chinese Boy in School.

Each Chinese schoolboy must furnish his own stool and table for school work, and the "Four Precious Articles," which are the ink slab, a cake of India ink, a brush for writing and paper, says Everybody's Magazine. With these he begins his weary task of learning to write and read the thousands of Chinese characters. These are to open the way to the Chinese classics, and a knowledge of this ancient literature and wisdom means education to the Chinese.

At the opening of a Chinese school a paper on which is written the name of Confucius is pasted on the wall. Before this honored name the pupils and teachers burn paper money and joss sticks and bow their heads three times to the floor. The teacher then tells Confucius the day, the month and the year when the school is opened and begs for his favor. Every morning when the pupils arrive they must bow twice, once for the teacher and once for Confucius.

The Elephant as a Mother.

A wild beast tamer of long experience tells some interesting things of the affection of elephants for their young. He had an elephant once, he says, who did all in her power to spoil her young one. She fussed over it and cuddled it up so that when the time came for it to leave the cage it was simply unmanageable. When one of the men made a bold move toward the baby he was promptly butted in the stomach and bowled over in a peculiar way which the youngster had of expressing his feelings toward those whom he disliked. At last, by a ruse, the mother and son were separated. But there was no such thing as keeping them apart. The baby rubbed the skin off his forehead and trunk, trying to get through the bars, and both wailed so long and piteously that the keeper was obliged to put them together again.

Two Little Dimples.

Two little dimples went out to look
  For snug little places to hide.
They thought that they never could find a
    nook,
  Till dear Minny Apples they spied!
      Then down those two
      Little dimples flew,
  Till each was lodged in a cheek,
      And for years they've tried
      But they cannot hide,
  For when Minny laughs out they peek.

A Compliment for Mama.

One day a little girl's mama made some cocoa for lunch. The mother asked,

"How do you like the cocoa?"

"I like it very much," answered the child.

Then the mother said: "I took a great deal of pains to make it nice."

To this the little girl replied, "Mama every pain shows."

Perplexing.

Boy—Mama, can people leave part of themselves in different places of the country?

Mother—Why no, where did you get that ridiculous idea?

Boy—Uncle Tom said he was going to Denver for his lungs and Auntie June said she thought she would go to the Hot Springs for her heart.

The Turtle.

Little Ted had found a turtle,
  And he looked with wond'ring eyes
At the creature while I told
  The name and nature of hsi prize.
Then he touched the shell, half shyly,
  While he said, 'twixt smile and pout,
"If the turtle's in this box
  I wish 'twould hurry and come out."

Willing to Judge.

Bobby was visiting at his Aunt Martha's, and when he was asked at the dinner table what kind of pie he liked best, apple, mince or pumpkin, he replied, after thinking it over for a few moments:

"I don't know exactly, Auntie, I guess you had better give me a piece of each, so that I can find out!"

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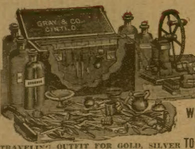
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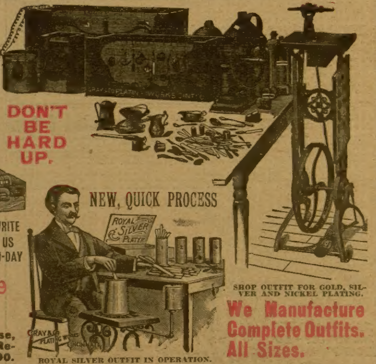
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If you read it and take advantage of the opportunity offered, you will never regret it. To own a business yourself is certainly your ambition.

We start you in a profitable business. Teach you **absolutely free** how to conduct it.

To show you what others have done, we quote the expressions of a few who have made money in the nickel, gold, silver and metal plating business:

"MR. REED MADE $88.16 THE FIRST 3 DAYS." Mr. Cox writes: "Get all I can do. Elegant business. Customers happy." Dave Crawford writes: "The first week I had my outfit I made $42.73." E. D. Waterbury writes: "Am 60 years old. Just completed job of 1800 pieces tableware. I clear about $6.00 a day profit."

Gentlemen and ladies positively make $5 to $15 a day at home or traveling, taking orders, using, selling and appointing agents for PROF. GRAY'S Latest Improved, Guaranteed Plating Machines and Outfits. NO FAKE OR TOYS, but genuine, practical, complete, scientific outfits for doing the finest of plating on WATCHES, JEWELRY, KNIVES, FORKS, SPOONS, CASTORS, TABLEWARE OF ALL KINDS, BICYCLES, SEWING MACHINES, SWORDS, REVOLVERS, HARNESS AND BUGGY TRIMMINGS, metal specialties; in fact all kinds of metal goods. HEAVY THICK PLATE EVERY TIME. GUARANTEED TO WEAR FOR YEARS. No experience necessary.

There is really a wonderful demand for replating. You can do business at nearly every house, store, office or factory. Almost every family has from $2 to $10 worth of tableware to be plated, besides watches, jewelry, bicycles, etc.

Every boarding house, hotel, restaurant, college or public institution has from $5 to $75 worth of work to be plated. **Every jeweler, repair or bicycle shop, every dentist, doctor and surgeon,** every man, woman and child you meet has either a watch, some jewelry, bicycles, instruments, or some articles needing plating.

Besides the above there are hundreds of patentees and manufacturers of metal goods, bicycles, sewing machines and typewriter repair shops who want their goods plated, or to whom you can sell a plating outfit, furnishing them supplies for doing their own plating.

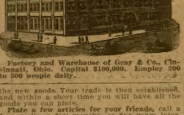
Retail Stores who handle hardware, harness, tableware and plated or metal goods all need a plating and polishing outfit for refinishing goods that become worn, soiled, rusty or [illegible]

Every Undertaker requires a plating outfit for repairing and finishing coffin and hearse trimmings which are soiled, tarnished or worn.

Manufacturers are making and selling tons of new tableware, jewelry, bicycles and various kinds of metal goods every month which has only a very thin plate, which, in a few weeks, wears off, making the goods unsightly, unfit for future use unless plated.

Manufacturers of new goods do no replating on old goods whatever, but try to force the public to throw away the old and buy new at high prices, but this only makes the plating business better.

The more new thinly plated goods sold the greater will be the demand for plating. Plate some articles for your friends and neighbors by Professor Gray's Process, and it quickly proves to them its genuineness and merit and that your plating is much thicker, will wear better and longer than a large percentage of the new goods. Your trade is then established, and within a short time you will have all the goods you can plate.



Factory and Warehouse of Gray & Co., Cincinnati, Ohio. Capital $100,000. Employ 200 to 300 people daily.

Plate a few articles for your friends, call a few weeks, a few months, or five years later, and you will find the plate satisfactory, and they will give you every article they have needing to be plated.

When you deliver the goods plated to customers they will be well pleased, in fact, delighted with the work, will pay for it promptly, and you will be given on an average twice as much work to be plated as they gave you the first time you called.

YOU CAN DO PLATING SO CHEAP

that every person can afford to have their goods plated.

No tidy housekeeper will allow worn and rusty tableware to go before a guest when it can be restored and made equal to new.

No person will wear jewelry or a watch, or ride a bicycle, or use a typewriter, sewing machine, or any machine made of metal from which the plate is worn off when they see samples of your work and hear your prices. People in this day and generation are too sensible and economical to throw away their old goods and buy new when they can have their old goods replated for so small a cost, making them, in many cases, better than when [illegible]

The best part of the plating business is that it increases fast and is permanent.

Put out your sign, secure your outfit, do a little work, and quickly you will be favored with orders. If you do not wish to do the plating yourself you can hire boys for $3 or $4 a week to do the work the same as we do, and solicitors to gather up goods to be plated on commission.

It is not hard work, but is pleasant, and especially so when your business is netting you $20 to $35 a week for 5 or 6 hours' work a day.

This is only a minimum income which may be earned by any one who is not lazy; hustlers should make $100 weekly.

TREMENDOUS PROFITS.

The profits realized from plating are tremendous.

To plate a set of teaspoons requires only about 2c. worth of metal and chemicals; a set of knives, forks or tablespoons about 3c. worth. The balance of the price received for the work is for the agent's time and profit.

Agents usually charge from 25c. to 50c. per set for plating teaspoons, from 50c. to 75c. for tablespoons and forks, and from 60c. to $1.00 for knives.

We allow you to set your own price for plating. Get as much as you can. You will have no competition. You know what it costs to plate the goods, and all you get over cost is profit. Some agents charge much more than the above prices, while others do the work for half and still make plenty of money.

Let us start you in business for yourself at once, don't delay a single day. Be your own boss. Be a money maker. **We do all kinds of plating ourselves,** have had years of experience, and are headquarters for plating supplies. We manufacture our own dynamos and outfits, all sizes, and send them out complete, with all tools, lathes, wheels and materials; everything ready for use.

We teach you everything, furnish all receipts, formulas and trade secrets free, so that failure should be impossible, and any one who follows our directions and teachings can do fine plating with a little practice, and become a money maker.

THE ROYAL SILVER OUTFIT.

Prof. Gray's Famous Discovery.

THE NEW DIPPING PROCESS is the latest, quickest, easiest method known. Tableware plated by simply dipping in melted metal, taken out instantly, with a fine, brilliant, beautiful plate deposited. All ready to deliver to customers. MAKES THICK PLATE EVERY TIME. GUARANTEED TO WEAR 5 to 10 YEARS. A BOY PLATES 100 to 300 **pieces tableware daily, from $10 to $30 worth of work,** profits almost 1000 per cent. Goods come out of plate finely finished. **No polishing, grinding or work necessary, neither before or after plating.**

You will not need to canvass. Agents write they have all the goods they can plate. People bring it for miles around. You can hire boys cheap to do your plating, the same as we do, and solicitors to gather work for a small per cent. Put a small advertisement or two in your local paper and you will have all the plating you can do. The plating business is honest and legitimate. Plating on our machines gives perfect satisfaction. Wears for years; customers are always delighted and recommend you and your work.

We are an old established firm, have been in business for years, know exactly what is required, furnish complete outfits, the same as we ourselves use, and customers always have the benefit of our experience. **We are responsible and guarantee everything. Reader, here is a chance of a lifetime to go in business for yourself. We start you.** Now is the time to make money.

FREE—WRITE US TO-DAY

for our new plan and proposition; also valuable information how the plating is done. Sit down and write now, so we can start you without delay. If you wish to see a sample of plating by our Outfit, send 2c. postage. Send your address anyway.

GRAY & CO., Plating Works, 592 Miami Building, CINCINNATI, OHIO.

The above firm is thoroughly reliable and do just as they agree. The outfits are just as represented, and do fine plating, and after investigation we consider this one of the best paying businesses we have yet heard of.—Editor.